

**THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
INSTITUTE OF HISTORY**

# **THE TRUTH ON KOSOVA**

**ENCYCLOPAEDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE**

**TIRANA 1993**



**EDITORIAL STAFF:**

**Kristaq PRIFTI - Lefter NASI - Luan OMARI - Pellumb XHUFİ -  
Selami PULAHA - Stefanaq POLLO - Zamir SHTYLLA**

**“ THE TRUTH ON KOSOVA “**

**FIRST EDITION January 1993**

**ENCYCLOPAEDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Rruga Mohamet Gjollështa - TIRANA ( ALBANIA )  
Ph. +355.42.28064 - 27232 - 26158**

**Phototyped & Printed in TIRANA by  
TEKNOTRADE LTD.  
Ph. +355.42.23932**

## FOREWORD

This book, which is presented to scholars and public opinion, is a collection of scientific articles by Albanian and foreign authors, accompanied with a series of documents from archives of Albania and other countries. While not claiming to give a comprehensive history of Kosova and the Albanian population in Yugoslavia from Antiquity to the present day, the editorial staff has included in the present book studies and documents which treat some of the more important problems of the history of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia. The wealth of facts and sources is used to shed light on those aspects of the past and present of Kosova and the Albanian population, those which for a long time and especially during the last 8 years the Yugoslav historiography and propaganda have been presenting in a completely distorted manner and in open contradiction with the truth. Such distortions pervade the book published recently in Yugoslavia under the title *Kosovo - Past and Present* (Belgrade 1989), which was prepared by Mjedunarodna Politika.

A good part of the book *The Truth on Kosova* is comprised of scientific articles written by specialists of the Republic of Albania especially for this publication. Besides these, there are also articles by Albanian authors from Kosova and scholars from other countries, previously published in different scientific journals. Most of them are reprinted in full. While from the studies which deal with a wide range of problems only those sections or excerpts which are relevant to this book have been taken. Apart from documents and materials from the press, the volume contains 33 scientific articles. As a rule, the documents have been published in full. This volume appeared in Albanian in 1989. Some changes have been made in the English version.

The contents have been arranged according to problems and chronological order. The documents generally retain their original titles. At the end of each article the source from which it was taken is recorded.

The studies and documents included in this volume are the result of careful research into the local and foreign bibliographies and in various archives, of which, the most important are :

The Central State Archives of the Republic of Albania - Tirana (CSA of RA); the Central Archives of the Army at the Ministry of Defence of the RA - Tirana (CAA); the Archives of the Institute of History - Tirana (AIH); the Archives of the Council of Ministers - Turkey, Istanbul (Basbakanlik) Archive (Bb.A.); Haus - Hof und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv - Austria, Vienna (HHSTA, PA); Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères - France, Paris (AMAE); Politisches Archiv des Auswartigen Amtes - FR of Germany, Bonn (PAAA); the Archives of the Foreign Office - England, London (Foreign Office - FO); Diplomatic Archives of the United Secretariat for Foreign Affairs - Yugoslavia, Belgrade (Diplomatski Arhiv Saveznog Sekretariata za Inostrane Poslova - DASSIP); the Archives of the Institute of Military History - Yugoslavia, Belgrade (Arhiv Vojno Istorijsko Instituta - AVII); the Archives of Yugoslavia - Belgrade (Arhiv Jugoslavije - AJ).

In the footnotes throughout the text, the names of archives are given in full and subsequently used in their abbreviated form.

Besides the editorial staff, Seit Mancaku, Marenglen Verli, Ana Lalaj and Harillaq Kekezi helped in preparing this volume.

## THE EDITORIAL STAFF



## CHAPTER 1

### THE ALBANIANS AN AUTOCHTHONOUS POPULATION IN KOSOVA

SKENDER ANAMALI

Doctor of Historical Sciences

#### THE ILLYRIANS AND THE ALBANIANS

The Illyrians were one of the largest populations in Europe and inhabited an extensive territory including the western part of the Balkan Peninsula along the coasts of the Ionian and the Adriatic Seas to the foot of the Alps. In the north, on the shores of the Sava and Danub Rivers, they had Celts as neighbours; in the east their natural borders were the Morava and Vardar Rivers dividing them from Thrace; in the south the Pindus and other mountains separated them from the Macedonians and the Greeks.(1)

In this area lived a number of Illyrian tribes, large and small. They were a sizeable people - "Hauptfolk" (as J.G.Thunman, one of the founders of Illyrology called them), and "the Illyrians took part in the fundamental cultural and social processes and the political events which the Mediterranean world of Antiquity underwent."(2) Recently, the Yugoslav scholar, Aleksandar Stipcevic, has defined the role of this people even better by pointing out that "every story about the Balkans begins with the Illyrians."(3)

Among the writers of antiquity, Herodotus was the first to mention the Illyrians. The value of his testimony is great and not only because it is the earliest, the 5th century B.C., but also because it defines the Illyrian territory. To avoid repeating what we have said at the start, it seems appropriate to cite what the French scholar, Pierre Cabanesse, wrote about the Illyrians: "First we must seek in the ancient authors a definition of the territory of the Illyrians, and then it is up to us to define the zone studies in particular in this book. In fact it seems that a very extensive Illyria is drawn from ancient sources if it is believed that in the middle of the 5th century B.C. Herodotus used the term Illyria to indicate the populations settled on a large area, from north of the Adriatic Sea to the borders of Epirus. In I, 196 he describes the Venetes as Illyrians; also Illyrian are the populations of Central Dalmatia (IV, 49) in the province of the Argos River (without doubt, Western Morava) in the land of Autariates; in Central Albania he mentions the Encheleans (IX, 43), which leads to the definition of a broad Illyria bounded in the west by the Adriatic, in the north reaching the Alps, the Sava and the Danube, and in the east running down the Morava and Vardar which divide it from Thrace."(4)

Another ancient source about the geographical distribution of the Illyrians is Appianus, the Greek historian, who lived in the 2nd century A.D. According to him, "the Hellenes called Illyrians those who inhabited the land above Macedonia and Thrace, from the Chaonians and Thesprotes to the Ister River.

And this is the length of the country, while its breadth is from the highlands of Macedonia and Thrace to the Paeonians and Ionian Sea and the foot of the Alps."(5)



This Illyria of Appianus is very similar to the Roman Illyricum and conforms to the Illyria of Herodotus and has aroused doubts in some scholars who have tried to reduce it in the north and the east. However, it seems to us correct to believe what was written by Appianus who in his time knew the Illyrians better than we do.

The attempts to curtail the Illyrian territory belongs to recent years. Some Yugoslav scholars are needlessly politicizing this question and the ethnogenesis of the Albanians and overexerting themselves "to overturn" the historical reality of the Illyrians, in general, and the Dardanians, one of the prominent Illyrian tribes, in particular. This little known tribe in Central Balkans had previously attracted the attention of scholars because of its geographical position and continual wars with the Macedonian state, but more especially in connection with its ethnic determination. Basing themselves on written sources of Antiquity, onomastics and toponomastics, and archaeological data, most scholars have proved the Illyrian ethnic origin of the Dardanians. Indeed, a number of Yugoslav scholars reached this conclusion earlier, and one of them is M.Garasanin, who has become the main opponent of their Illyrian origin today.(6) We shall mention a few of the supporters of the thesis that the Dardanians are Illyrians. First, the German historian Rudiger Mack, for whom "the genuine Dardanians whose ancient settlements must be sought in the immediate vicinity of Shkup are like the other tribes in this territory, Illyrians, as Strabo describes them (VII, 313, 315)." He adds that "most linguists support the Illyrian origin of the Dardanians" and lists Tomascheck, Kretschmer, Krahe, Jokl and Vulic.(7) For the Rumanian archaeologist, Radu Vulpe, who has traced the Illyrians in the Latin inscriptions of imperial Italy, "the Illyrian origin of the Dardanians is certain." (8) The Yugoslav archaeologist Emil Cerskov is also of this opinion. He writes: "The fact cannot be placed in doubt that the Dardanians belong to the Illyrian trunk, although somewhat mixed with Thracian elements in the border zones. The character of the Halstatt civilization in our provinces, similar to that of Glasinac and Macedonia, also supports this view." (9) It is interesting that, in note 23, this author quotes in support of his thesis M.Garasanin who considers the Dardanians Illyrians, an opinion M.Garasanin was to re-emphasize at a symposium on the Illyrians.(10) For A.Stipcevic, P.Cabanes, N.Duric, E.Dobruna, and Z.Mirdita, too, the Dardanians are Illyrians. Mirdita has devoted a special place to Dardanians in his studies and examined in detail the problem of their ethnogenesis, arriving at significant conclusions.

He writes: "From all that has been said the conclusion is automatically imposed that the Dardanians are of Illyrian origin, with an obvious palaeo-Balkan ethno-cultural element and with interminglings of the Thracian element in the eastern extremities of their territories." (11)

That the Dardanians are Illyrians emerges also from a well-known study of the Yugoslav historian, Fanula Papazoglu. She reached these conclusions about the ethnic origin of the Dardanians based on relatively extensive documentation: (12) "1. - The literary tradition according to which the Dardanians were Illyrians. 2. The linguistic material : a) glosses which do not permit any firm conclusion; b) onomastics or names of historic persons of the epoch of Dardanian independence and local names in the inscriptions of the province of Dardania which confirm that despite the predominance of the Thracian element in the eastern part of Dardania, the Dardanians belong more to the family of the Illyrians than to that of the Thracians; c) toponomastics or toponyms quoted by Procopius, which indicate the same ratio between the areas of distribution of the Illyrian and Thracian languages; the latter is confined to the eastern part of the country, while Illyrian is apparent all over the country. 3 Ethnology. 4. Rare archaeological data from the fourth to the first centuries B.C.; early Halstatt and the epoch of transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age, relatively well-known; close relations with Illyrian civilization." (13) For F.Papazoglu, only "political development has contributed to the distinction of the Dardanians as a separate people."



At a recent conference F.Papazoglu presented a different opinion. At the outset she hastens to declare that "despite the fact that the Illyrian element indisputably had a role in their ethnogenesis, the Dardanians cannot be identified with the Illyrians." (14) Referring to a hypothesis by the Bulgarian linguist, V.Georgiev, she discovers a more ancient Daco-Moesian, or Proto-Phrygian stratum in the formation of the Dardanians; indeed, without any factual basis, she seeks a similar ethno-linguistic situation in the southern part of Illyria. Without going into the question of the existence of a Daco-Moesian stratum about which our linguists have taken their stand, I consider it necessary to quote another statement of the Bulgarian scholar in the same paper, which has escaped F.Papazoglu: "A group of anthroponyms", he writes, "is characteristic especially of the Illyrian part of the Roman province of Macedonia and Southeastern Dalmatia, that is, the part which includes approximately present-day Albania and Southwestern Yugoslavia. Such personal names are *Bardulis, Bardeias, Clevas, Epicadus, Gentios, Clavos, Grabos, Grabon, Laid(i)us, Longarus, Monunis...* This is the region of Illyria proper, *Illyri proprie dicti*." (15)

Making a distinction between individual political groups and their role, as in the case of the Dardanian state, without overlooking the political state of the Dalmatians, which became a tribal federation within the general territory inhabited by the Illyrians, historian Aleks Buda gives a clear explanation when he writes: "Thus, the inclusion of the territory of the Illyrian Dardanians in a political group different from that of the Illyrian Kingdom did not bring about an ethnic-cultural reality, just as quantitative differences in the process of 'culturization', i.e. the lower level of assimilation of Hellenic influences, were insufficient to distinguish Dardania as an independent cultural group." (16)

The Illyrians are ancient inhabitants of the western and central parts of the Balkans. The data of archaeology show that in Albania, during the Bronze and the Iron Ages, there was never any interruption in their cultural development, and they had close contacts with the neighbouring countries. On the basis of this internal development, without the external intervention of other ethnic groups, the ethno-genetic process went on; at the end of the Bronze Age and during the Iron Age, this led to the formation of the Illyrian ethnos, with cultural and linguistic features which distinguished it from the other palaeo-Balkan populations.

A similar phenomenon occurred in Dardania at this time. In connection with the latter, valuable information comes from excavations in Kukes region (Northeastern Albania which belongs to Western Dardania) and studies have shown the autochthonous character of the pre- and proto-historic Dardanian culture and the ethnos to which it belongs. (17) New but very crucial results have been achieved also in the study of the socio-economic changes in the tribal society of Southern Illyria in the various stages of its evolution and especially the early signs of the preconditions for the beginning of urban life and the creation of the first state formations. At the end of 5th century B.C., the Illyrians entered a new course of development. In the subsequent centuries, the Southern Illyrian regions, especially the coastal ones, followed an independent social and political course. The intensive urbanization of this region and the growth of Illyrian economy in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. led to the establishment of the slaveowning order and the formation of Illyrian states. Among them was the Illyrian State or Kingdom, which played a major role in the political events of the time. (18) With the emergence of this state, the words *Illyria* and *Illyrians* along with their broad ethnic and geographical meaning, acquired a narrower political meaning. In the time of its greatest extension this state expanded its territory to include the regions from the Naretva River in the north to the Vjosa in the south and reached Lake Ohri on the border with Macedonia in the east. In the internal regions the Dardanians, also, formed a powerful state, which constantly expanded, becoming stronger and more stable than its neighbours. It reached a relatively high level of progress and achieved urban development, although it was not up to the contemporary cities on the Adriatic coast. Since they were neighbours, the territories of the two states had reciprocal connections



in the political and economic fields; the latter were very intensive and continued for a longer period. This fact, especially the finding of a large number of coins and handicraft products (pottery) from the cities of Southwestern Illyria, had long been noticed by scholars. Thus, at the end of the last century, in speaking about the Prizren-Gjakova-Peja region (Kosova-Yugoslavia), A.Evans writes: "... A quantity of coins from Durrachium and Apollonia prove that in the pre-Roman Age Metohija was traversed by trade routes which linked it with the Adriatic and the Aegean and the countries between them." (19)

Southern Illyria, which corresponds to the areas inhabited by the Albanians today, had a high level of social and cultural development before the Roman occupation. Here the more prominent political state of the Illyrians emerged and flourished; by uniting the more advanced tribes and regions in a state, it opened the way to a convergent process which operated for several centuries, even after Roman occupation. The other neighbouring state of the Dardanians also took part in this convergent process. Southern Illyria witnessed a more intensive urbanization and a greater progress of urban culture. The close and uninterrupted intercourse between Illyrian tribes, states and urban centres brought about unity through "koinons" and military alliances, according to specific situations. Southern Illyria never had "powerful separatist tendencies", as M.Garasanin claims. (20) The wide Illyrian diversity, from the earliest times, must in no way be identified with "powerful separatist tendencies". On the contrary, within this diversity there was in some of its territories a unity with special ethno-linguistic features, with a contemporary culture and with a developed ethnic self-awareness. On this territory the Illyrian culture served not only as a means of relations but also as a means of resistance to ethnic assimilation; the process of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians came later. Southern Illyria, including some eastern regions, established good relations with the neighbouring Greek world, and Greek became the written language of official inscriptions. These relations must not be treated as "a Hellenization of special intensity". (21) Relations with the cities and people of Greece, Macedonia and Southern Italy favoured the spread of Hellenism in Southern Illyria. But this was not an Hellenization of the Illyrians but rather an extension of the Greek way of life among the residents of towns. In some cities, semi-Hellenized society emerged, particularly among the upper strata, but the peasants retained their mother tongue and remained Illyrian. (22)

Inscriptions are of special interest on this question. In general, the anthroponymy is mixed, but recently the number of Illyrian names has increased. (23) A series of inscriptions in various parts of the southern Balkans characteristic of Southern Illyrian names indicates an ethnic consciousness of the Illyrians in the 3rd-1st centuries B.C., but also later. Some of them have the name following the ethnic label *Illyrios*, *Illyria*, *Illyrias*, or the birthplace such as *Dimalitis*, *Epidamnios* (accompanied with an Illyrian name), and *Bullion*. (24)

\*

\*

\*

The first contacts of the Romans with Southern Illyrians took place in the second half of the 3rd century B.C., when Rome began the wars of the occupation of Illyria. The three Illyrian-Roman wars of the occupation of Illyria. The three Illyrian-Roman wars beginning in the year 229 B.C. and ending in 168 B.C. (they continued later in the north and northeast), enabled the Romans to gain first-hand acquaintance with the geography and economic resources and with the social order and the material and spiritual culture of Southern Illyria. After 168



B.C. and the collapse of the Illyrian Kingdom, Rome took measures to destroy its power; its territory was broken into three small subject states which were compelled to pay a tribute, and two decades later it was placed in the province called Macedonia, at the head of which stood a magistrate appointed by Rome. The history of Southern Illyria after these events is little known (at this time the Dardanians together with other tribes fought against the Roman occupiers). For a century the written sources are silent; the epigraphic and numismatic data tell us that Southern Illyria splintered into independent communities (*Koinons*) like the Byllioes, Amanthes, Parthini, Dassaretis, Labeates, etc. or city-states like Epidamnus-Durrachion and Apollonia. These small states experienced a period of economic, social and cultural prosperity manifested in their urban buildings, in various branches of handicrafts and in their relations with various parts of the Balkans, especially Greece. (25) The three states on the territory of King Gentios (26) also had similar governments and advanced economic growth. An inscription in Greek found recently in Montenegro (Yugoslavia) probably belonged to the community of the Labeates. It gives the characteristic Illyrian names of two officers and several soldiers and is dated in the second half of the 2nd century B.C. It is similar to the inscription of Rabiye (Southern Albania) in the Koinon of the Byllines.(27)

In the 50s of the 1st century B.C. Southern Illyria went through a period of disturbances which had grave consequences for some of its regions. There are very few Latin inscriptions for this period, and the main information comes from two Roman writers, Cicero and Caesar, who were involved in these troubles. These events were an insurgent movement of the Illyrian tribe Pirustae "in the border part of Illyricum" (Caesar, B.C. V, p.1, 5). The city of Durrachium went through crises first as a victim of the notorious proconsul of the province of Macedonia, Lucius Calpurnius Piso, and, then as Pompeius' main naval base in his war with Caesar. The city of Bouthrotum also experienced similar problems connected with Cicero and Caesar. Caesar designated the city as the site of a colony where veterans of his legions would be settled.

In the situation created after the civil wars and the rebellions of Southern Illyria, Augustus began to apply his policy to establish a new order and a number of colonies in Macedonia. In the western part of this province, four important Illyrian cities (*Scodra*, *Durrachium*, *Byllis*, and *Bouthrotum*) were chosen for the colonies.

The Roman colonies with their agricultural lands comprised a relatively small part of the large territory of Southern Illyria. The other Illyrian regions, especially the internal ones, stayed outside the colonizing operation of Rome.

Some of the cities retained their "autonomy" and administrative apparatus down to the first centuries of our era. According to N.Damascenus (fragm. 17), Augustus proclaimed Apollonia a *civitas libera et immunis*. The city of Amantia also retained the status of a free city and, according to Pliny (n.h.IV, 10), its inhabitants were called "liberi Amantini". The free Illyrian cities, both those which had begun to decline and those still standing, remained "peregrine" tributary cities. Besides free cities, there were also free regions.

In Southern Illyria, Latin did not replace Illyrian and did not become the language of the common people, just as Greek before and afterwards did not become the language of the common people; it was a medium of culture, commerce and administration. The attempts of some foreign scholars, today and in the past, to increase the weight of the Italic or Latin-speaking natives in relation to the Illyrian population and as a consequence, to claim the Romanization of the latter, is futile and devoid of historical evidence. Everything we know about the population of Southern Illyria and its life under Romans opposes this thesis. There is no sign of a large influx of settlers from Rome or Italy into Southern Illyria or their assimilation of the local population. The Roman colonies and their peripheral areas remained isolated and eventually dissolved in the Illyrian population. It has already been agreed that the extent of Romanization was conditioned, first of all, by the actual spread of the Latin language.



It seems to us a correct view that "A Romanized population is a population which speaks Latin, which has acquired a Roman world outlook through the adoption of Roman beliefs, customs and elements of spiritual culture. However, the linguistic factor remains the decisive one, without which there can be no talk of a true Romanization." (28) In the Southern Illyrian territories, this linguistic factor is absent.

The number of Latin inscriptions found in Albania is small when compared with the number found in other provinces of the Roman Empire. It is a total of 293 inscriptions, half of which belong to the colony of Durrachium and its periphery. There are very few in the other colonies, and outside them a few are found mainly in localities along main roads. There are whole regions with no Latin inscriptions. Among the extant inscriptions quite a few include traditional Illyrian names such as *Epicadus*, *Plator*, *Sura*, *Annaeus* and *Annaia*, *Pladomenus*, *Bennius* (also widespread in other Illyrian regions) and Illyrian ethnic labels such as *Scodrina*, *Parthinus*, *Epitinus*, *Naissus*, *Nutria*. Traditional Illyrian names like *Andinus*, *Annius*, *Dassius*, *Epicadus*, *Genthiana*, *Rhedon*, *Surus*, *Tata*, *Tridus* can be found in inscriptions in Dardania. (29)

In connection with what we have said, we consider wellfounded the opinion of the well-known historian Th. Mommsen, who, in pointing out the contradictions between the senatorial and imperial regimes, emphasized, "With this, moreover, may be connected the fact that the Illyrian nationality held its ground better in the sphere of Macedonian governorship than in that of the Dalmation, in the former it still lives at the present day, and in the imperial period, apart from the Greek Apollonia and the Italic colony of Durrachium, the two languages of the Empire were made use of, in the interior the language of the people must have continued to be the Illyrian." (30) At the end of the 3rd and in the 4th century A.D., the Roman Empire entered a long phase of crisis which was to end with its disintegration. In more than a century, the native population grew stronger in many places. Dardania was "one of the least Romanized Balkan regions. Its native population seems to have preserved better than elsewhere its ethnic individuality and consciousness... Hence, the possibility must not be ruled out that the Dardanians who escaped Romanization may have survived the Slav migrations and emerged in the Middle Ages with the name Albanians." (31)

The Illyrian peasant population displayed a perceptible vitality in art, too. A number of gravestones of the late Roman Empire attest to the rebirth of sculpture and have documentary value. Carved in relief, they depict local residents in their traditional dress, working people, farmers and craftsmen. These works of folk stone-carvers express the world outlook and culture of the local people.

The efforts of a number of cities to survive and their subsequent decline are characteristic of this period. The fortified military camps or castles built on the plains (Scampa, Vig, Bushat, and Grazhdan in Northern Albania, and Paleocastra in the south) comprise a separate group. The building of these fortified camps not only along the main roads but also in the interior regions, and the presence of mobile legions presuppose a rise in the spirit of resistance among the Illyrians. Procopius of Caesarea (b.vand.III 2,9) mentions an uprising of the Taulanti in 395 A.D. Emperor Honorius put it down with the aid of Alaric's West-Goths. Some inscriptions of Dardania tell of another form of local resistance, the movement of "latrones", an insulting name by which the Romans called the rebellious slaves and villagers of Dardania.

Uninterrupted resistance to the centuries-long Roman occupation not only prevented the Romanization of Southern Illyrians, but also forged unity in their ranks. This was not just a unity of the material and spiritual culture and language, but true ethnic unity, which continued in subsequent centuries.



At the end of the 4th century A.D. the Roman Empire split in two. The Southern Illyrians became subjects of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire.

The proto-Byzantine period in Southern Illyria was characterized by the continuation of cities and urban life. According to Synecdemos of Hierocles (XII, 652, XIII, 653 and 654, and XIV, 655 and 656), in southern provinces of Illyria there were 20 inhabited centres considered towns. These were Scodra, Lissus, Dyrrhachium (Epidamnos), Scampa, Apollonia, Bylis, Amantia, Polythermopolis, Aulon, Aulinidos, Metropolis-Lychnis, Phoinike, Anchiasmos, Butritos, Scupometropolis, Ulpiana. This list, supplemented by other reports like that by Procopius of Caesarea (*De Aedificis*, IV, 4), gives an idea of the demography of Illyrian territory.

The Illyrians continued to be mentioned in the Byzantine chronicles although more and more infrequently. Isidorus Hispaniensis (5th century) refers to the Illyrians as inhabitants of Illyria, while, a century later, Euagrius, in his *Church History*, writes about Illyrian soldiers and bishops.(32)

Without denying the changes in the ethnic map of the Balkans from the end of the 6th century with the settlement of Slavs, but without exaggerating the role and consequences of Avar-Slav incursions into Southern Illyrian provinces of Praevalis, Dardania, New Epirus and Old Epirus, we must point out that the Southern Illyrians successfully resisted the centuries-long pressure of Romanians. They also coped with the invasions by Avars and Slavs which did not happen in the same way and with the same intensity in all the Balkan regions and the above provinces remained outside their main wave. The contemporary Byzantine sources speak of invaders reaching, for example, the vicinity of Dyrrachium. Pope Gregory writes in his letters that the razing of the city of Lissus by the Slavs (the years 591-592) during their return from the siege of Thessalonica was a fortuitous episode, because such diocesan cities as Scodra and Dioklea were unharmed and continued their normal life. The 9th-century chronicle of Monenvasia says that, during their invasion of 587, the Slavs settled in Macedonia and Greece and occupied Thessaly, the whole of Greece, Old Epirus, Attica and Euboea. Epirus was to be again together with Greece and Thessaly, this time according to the anonymous authors of the second book of *Miracula Sancti Demetri*, a province which the Slavs plundered in the years 614 and 616. (33) It should be pointed out that sheltered in Thessalonika, besieged by the Avars and Slavs, were populations which had fled from Pannonia, Dacia and Dardania and the towns of Naissus and Sardika destroyed by the barbarians, but there were none from the western provinces of Illyricum.

According to P.Lemerle, the numerous invasions of Avars, Slavs or combined invasions of Avars and Slavs which swept the Balkans in the second half of the 6th century were directed mainly at the shores of the Black Sea, Thrace and Constantinople.(34)

As to how unimportant the Avar-Slav incursions were (no Byzantine chronicle speaks of invasions and settlements of foreign populations) and what little danger they presented for the Albanian territory is shown by the failure to find in them hoards of 6th and 7th century coins which are considered as "evidence of Slav, Avar, Persian or Bulgarian invasions." (35) The Slav raids were unimportant, and, despite the eventual destruction, they did not affect the native inhabitants who continued to live in their historical territory by preserving their own organization. Thus, writes the Yugoslav Byzantologist, J.Ferluga, the district of Durres had kept a continental foothold which included Praevalis, several cities had remained." (36)

The waves of destructive incursions or invasions of Slavs left no traces in the material and spiritual culture of the natives of the Southern Illyrian provinces (which retained its previous ethnic composition). Hence, there can be no talk either of Slavs or Slavonic culture. On this question let us recall the words of the Yugoslav scholar, V.Popovic, in 1975: "With the exception of the discoveries made in Olympia of 15 burials with cremation, which belonged to the late 7th century, no indisputably Slavonic object or entity has been discovered to date in



the Southern Balkans."(37)

At that time there was no large-scale settling of Slavs in the territory of Albania, as M.Garasanin claims there was, or even in Kosova or Montenegro (Yugoslavia) in the provinces of Dardania and Praevalis. According to the Yugoslav archaeologist, P.Mijovic, "Not only is there no evidence of the existence of a 'Slavonic' period in the city of Dukle, but in the whole of Montenegro up till now no place of habitation or necropolis has been discovered." He adds that in Montenegro from the 7th to the 9th centuries there were no Slav towns and that "the so-called first Slav colonization in Dukle has left no traces in its urban life." (38) The Kosovar archaeologist E.Dobruna, in the conclusion of her studies on some ancient toponyms in Kosova, says: "we find the continuous presence of native Albanians as successors of the Illyrians in the same territory where they live today since ancient times."(39)

The Illyrians ended the Middle Ages with an advanced economic and social structure and a unified material and spiritual culture. After the 6th century, however, in the Byzantine chronicles there are no reports about the Illyrians (except the evidence of *Miracula Sancti Demetri*). From this period on, there are mainly archaeological materials with immense documentary value, because they are almost entirely native. Such is the "Koman culture" which has provided the clearest example of the Illyrian-Albanian continuity. Archaeologists have devoted special attention to the excavation and study of this culture. As a result of new searches, the number of necropolises of this culture has reached about 30, and they are found mainly in Northern and Central Albania. Elements of this culture have been discovered in recent years in Southern Albania, too. The Koman culture has been found outside the state borders of the PSRA, too, at Mijeje on the shore of Shkodra Lake (Montenegro, Yugoslavia) and in several places in the region of Ohri down to Prilep (Macedonia, Yugoslavia). The graves of Ston in Southern Dalmatia and Aphion on Corfu Island (Greece) belong to the diaspora of this culture.

First discovered at the end of last century in the cemetery at the castle of Dalmaca at Koman (Shkodra district), it took from it the name the *Koman culture*. Since then, a number of scholars have given different opinions about its bearers and the periods in which it flourished. New research has extended its geographical distribution; today it includes an extensive territory from Shkodra Lake in the north to Ohri Lake in the southeast, including the districts of Shkodra, Lezha, Puka, Mat, Mirdita, Kruja, Tirana and Durres, and, in the north-east, the district of Kukes, the eastern part of which belonged to Dardania. The distribution of the Koman culture includes few of the coastal regions and more of the interior of Northern and Central Albania.(40)

Following new research, the birth and growth of the Koman culture has a clear historical background and was associated, to a certain degree, with the political situation created in the western part of the Byzantine Empire, especially in the 7th and 8th centuries. The Slav invasions in the direction of Thessalonika and Constantinople cut the communications of major cities on the east coast of the Adriatic with Thessalonika and Constantinople, which were previously maintained via the Egnatia Road and later by sea routes.(41) As the graves uncovered around Ohri show, the Byzantine Empire had lost its control over large areas and the population recognized the Byzantine sovereignty only nominally. This situation and the change during the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610-641) in the widespread cultural life of Byzantium influenced the rise of separate narrow cultural zones. Such were the Arber culture of Koman and the culture or group of cultures of Southern Arberia. It had close connection with the city of Dyrrachium, a major economic and cultural centre of the Byzantine Empire in the west, through which the Byzantine imports and influences came to this zone. In the political situation created in the Byzantine Empire in the 7th and 8th centuries, the Koman culture is the work of the Arber population, which had gained a certain self-government within this empire, and this culture flourished because of internal factors.

One of the problems scholars of Koman culture have been examining is that of its ethnic



roots. In a series of studies it has been proved that the bearer of the Koman culture was an indigenous population originating from the Illyrians, which, in later sources, emerges with the names Alban, Arbanite, i.e. Arber.(42) The Koman culture is the direct continuation of the local culture of late Antiquity in this territory. This first component is one of the main lines of the Illyrian-Albanian continuity. This can be seen in a large part of the inventory (ornaments and tools) of all burial grounds, which reproduce the same forms found in the cemeteries of habitations of the 4th and 6th centuries. They are of interest because they indicate their local production and testify to the continuity of several crafts. They show that at the time of the Avar-Slav invasions the native section in the Albanian territories had stability and vitality.

Amongst the archaeological artefacts from the graves there are a number of ornaments which are connected with the traditional dress and spiritual world of ancient Illyrian culture. Such elements appear in the construction of graves and in the north-south placing of the bodies. Some have ornaments which come from the centuries-old heritage, but have lost their original function; others with decorative and practical functions had been produced by Arber craftsmen on the basis of Illyrian models. This second component leads to a logical conclusion that the roots of the Koman culture reach back to the early Illyrians.

Koman culture has some things in common with the palaeo-Byzantine culture. The most luxurious ones come directly from the Byzantine workshops of Dyrrachium, while the others, especially the ear-rings, are not found outside Arber territories. In the Arber ornaments, ear-rings are outstanding for their variety of beautiful forms, and although inspired by Byzantine models, they have assumed new forms, have gained a different artistic appearance, which is nonetheless beautiful. These artefacts comprise the third component.

The recent excavations and studies and the work of Yugoslav archaeologists no longer present the old opinion about the "Slav" origin of the Koman culture. Most of them admit that in the Koman culture can be seen "a material and spiritual proof of the culture of the local population" and that "it is formed as a separate culture in the tradition of late Antiquity"; another group holds that "an archaeological group with special characteristics and many Byzantine imports, which belongs to an ethnos, was formed in a given area."(43) After the discovery of graves on the shores of Lakes Shkodra and Ohri and in Kukes district, another fact must be pointed out: the Arber culture of Koman, as a continuation of the Illyrian culture, must be sought also in other regions inhabited by Southern Illyrians. Its discovery in Kukes and Ohri constituted clear proof that Dardania and the western part of Macedonia (Yugoslavia) were inhabited by the Arbers and had the same cultural level as other Arber regions. "The lack of discoveries of Koman culture in Macedonia and Dardania is due to relatively inadequate excavation, because in the neighbouring provinces of Pravalis and New Epirus there is both an autochthonous population and a number of related findings from the cemeteries. The cemetery of Koman in the Castle of Dalmaca and the cemetery of Kruja provide examples."

In recent years, the Yugoslav scholar, V. Popovic, has brought out a new theory (in fact old). Essentially, it is based on the idea that the Koman-Kruja civilization is a late Roman-Byzantine urban one, Christian in its content, and that since the users of the graves were neither Slavs nor Avars, but not Albanians, either, they must belong to a Romanized or proto-Roman population.(45) In note 77 of his last work, he hastens to demand priority for his opinion that the Koman-Kruja culture is a post-Antiquity Christian culture of the fortified centres.

Two shortcomings have led the author to these categorical but wrong conclusions. First, he is not well-acquainted with the geography of the extension of the Koman culture, and, second, he does not know all the archaeological material (he knows only that displayed in the Museum of National Antiquities of Saint-Germain-sur-Laye).(46)

The Koman culture covered a wide area and it has been discovered especially in the interior of Northern Albania where there were no fortified inhabited centres in Antiquity. In only a few



instances such as Lezha, Kruja and Shurdhah were the graves placed close to castles. Therefore, this culture has been called the culture of rural and urban communities. With the exception of the three places mentioned above, the graves are found mostly in remote places, far from trade routes or strategic roads, and have no connections with dioceses, except for that of Lissus, because that of Kruja belongs to the 9th century and that Shurdhah is even later, the year 1199 (47), when the Koman culture had declined. The Koman culture does not appear in Latin inscriptions; indeed discoveries of the Roman culture there are very rare.

In the regions in which these burial places are more frequent such as Puka, Mirdita, Mat and Kruja, no Latin inscription has been found. There are no Latin inscriptions either in the region of Ohri, where the epigraphic documentation of the time of the Roman occupation is in the Greek language. Let us come now to the Christian character of the Koman culture. It is true that, in the inventories of graves, some of the ornaments have Christian elements as decoration (ear-rings with peacocks, scenes of the Eucharist, broaches with religious decoration or rings with formulae of Christian prayers), but they are few in number. The ornaments which bear them are mainly luxury objects which are found throughout the Byzantine Empire. Here we must point out something else in connection with three rings. The prayer formulae are in Byzantine Greek, i.e. they are not in Latin which would have been expected in a Romanized population. The most recently discovered burial place in the village of Prosek in Mirdita, (48) has shown that the Arber culture of Koman does not have a Christian character. Two sectors have been excavated. The graves of sector A, with a north-south orientation, have objects of the Koman culture in their inventories, while those of sector B, with an east-west orientation, are of a later time and have only rings in their inventory, a fact which has been observed also in a 12th-century burial place within the castle of Shurdhah. (49)

The cause of these changes in world outlook, observable in the orientation of the graves and in the paucity of their inventory, is Christianity (9th-10th centuries), which gained strength after the creation of the theme of Dyrrachium. In support of his thesis of the Christian character of the Koman culture, V.Popovic mentions the presence of churches in the Arber cemeteries. Up till now, small churches have been discovered only in the cemeteries near the castle of Dalmaca and Shurdhah, but they have nothing to do with the Koman culture; hence, they do not prove the Christianity of this population. According to experts in Albanian church architecture, they belong to the 11th-12th centuries and after.(50)

V.Popovic does not analyse fully the archaeological materials discovered in the Arber burial places. He deals with only certain categories of objects, and even these do not all support his theory. His opinions are hasty and unsupported with arguments, as in the case of the arched fibulae the prototypes of which are sought far away in the Danube regions, (51) while such discoveries in Albania are not taken into account. The author also disregards the fact that massive fibulae such as those of the Arber graves have not been found up till now outside the territory of these graves.

V.Popovic's theory lacks factual proof. It examines the historical phenomena in isolation and in a schematic way, and not as a whole body of evidence. Having a very broad geographical distribution, the Koman culture is a culture of a rural and urban population, which inhabited the coastal and mountainous zones, the culture of a people with traditions from Antiquity and with distinct innovations against the background of the Early Middle Ages. Nothing supports the theory that it is of a late Roman-Byzantine or Christian character. Equally baseless is the opinion that its bearers have been a Romanized or proto-Roman population. On the contrary, it is an early Arber culture, a continuation of the Illyrian culture, which means that its Arber-early Albanian bearers are descendants of the Illyrians.

The new discoveries, though still limited, are shedding more and more light on the contents of the Arber culture of the early Middle Ages and its features. We have pointed out that if the Koman culture, or the Koman cultural group, is characterized by ornaments (part of which



is connected with the Mat-Glasinac-Drilon cultural group), the other materials such as weapons, work tools and utensils are common for all the Illyrian-Arber regions including those of Kosova and Southern Albania. The recent excavations in the districts of Permet, Kolonja, and Vlora have revealed a very interesting archaeological material - which has not been fully studied yet - which has many things in common with those of the Koman culture. This speaks of a material culture or a Southern cultural group which is connected with the Arber population. (52) The new discoveries in Dukat in Vlora confirm the presence in this region of an important element of the Koman culture, the peculiar bent fibula. The Arber cultural elements of early Middle Ages such as work tools, weapons and pottery and some limited ornaments, which have been made known through publications, exist also in Kosova. At the southern extremity of this territory, in Prilep (Macedonia - Yugoslavia) characteristic fibulae of the Koman culture have also been found. (53)

During the period of transition from Late Antiquity to Early Middle Ages, the towns were centres of the economic life of their districts, and conveyors of the material and spiritual culture from Illyrian Antiquity to the Arber Middle Ages. Some cities ceased to exist in the 6th to 7th centuries. Apollonia, Amantia, Bylis, and Phoinike are examples. However, this was not a complete deurbanization.

The Arber towns of the Early Middle Ages period have an urban character in common with those of Late Antiquity. Many of them have the same names as in Antiquity; in general, the mediaeval walls follow the line of Illyrian walls, and have retained the same church organization even the same religious buildings (Dyrrachium, Bouthrotum). In Kosova we can mention the mediaeval castle of Zveçan on the walls of late Antiquity, etc. In the Early Middle Ages we encounter the phenomenon of the metastasis, the shifting of Illyrian towns and the emergence of new towns, connected with the Arber population which had descended from the Illyrians. An example is the city of Kruja, the successor to Illyrian Albanopolis, which appears in the written documents of the 9th century. A similar change occurs with the Illyrian town of Bylis. Its successor was mediaeval Ballsh which has even inherited its name. In the mediaeval chronicles its name was translated and became Glavinica-Cephalene. A town which began its existence as a castle of the Arber population is Shurdhah - Sarda of the written sources. In Sarda elements inherited from the Castra of late Antiquity are present in the fortifications and urban area. Everything that can be seen in these cities, in the archaeological discoveries and in the architecture of castles has been observed in other fortified Illyrian habitations in the southern provinces and in Dardania too, and is associated with the Arber, the heirs to the ancient civilization who were acquainted with urban life and had early developed cities, which distinguishes them from the Slavs.

Following the creation of the Theme of Durres in the 9th century, the already consolidated Arber population became vigorous again. The Arbers entered the stage of the formation of their nationality, which was characterized by the gradual strengthening of feudal relations and the creation of a native feudal class which increased its role steadily over the centuries.



## NOTES

- 1 *Les Illyriens*. Aperçu historique, par S.Islami, S.Anamali, M.Korkuti, F.Prendi, sous la direction de S.Islami, Tirana 1985, Introduction, p.5.
- 2 A.Buda, *The Southern Illyrians as a Problem of Historiography* in "Historical Writings", vol.1, Tirana, 1986, p.14.
- 3 A.Stipcevic, *Every Story About the Balkans Begins with the Illyrians* "Bota e Re" Prishtina 1985.
4. P.Cabanes, *Les Illyriens de Bardylis à Genthios, IV-II siècles avant J.C* Sedes, Paris 1988, p.17.
- 5 Appianus, *Illyrica* I, p.102.
- 6 M.Garasanin, *Considerations finales* p.371. In the book *Iliri i Albanci* Belgrade 1988, he says that the Dardanians are clearly distinct from the Illyrians, because they were formed on the basis of a Daco-Moesian substratum. He accepts only an Illyrian infiltration into Dardania during the Iron Age, in the first half of the first millennium B.C. He claims that these facts are confirmed by the data of archaeology and numismatics as well as by the differences which can be discerned in the organization of Illyrian and Dardanian kingdoms, although he says nothing of what these differences are.
- 7 R.Mack, *Grenzmarken und Nachbarn Makedonen in Norden und Westen* Dissertation, Gottingen 1951, p.172, note 1.
- 8 R.Vulpe, *Gli Illiri dell'Italia Imperiale Romana* III, 1925, "Ephemeris Dacco-Romana, Annuario della scuola Romana di Roma", p. 163.
- 9 E.Cerskov, *Rimljani na Kosovu i Metohiji* Belgrade 1969. The quotation is taken from the French résumé, p.106, translated by M.Garasanin.
- 10 M.Garasanin, *Razmatranja o makedonskin halstatu - Materijalna kultura, kronologija, etnicki problem* "Starinar", n.s.V-VI/1954-1955, p.38; Ibid., *Istocna granica ilira prema arheoloskim spomenicima* "Simpozium o teritorijalnom i hronoloskom razgranicenji ilira u praistorijsko doba", Sarajevo 1964, p.139.
- 11 Z.Mirdita, *Dardanian Studies* "Rilindja", Prishtina 1979, p.49.
- 12 F.Papazoglu, *Srdnjobalkanska plemena u predrimsko doba* Sarajevo 1969, p.402.
- 13 Ibid., p.208. She, too, in the article *Dardanska onomastika*, *Zbornik filozofskog Fakulteta* 8-1, Belgrade 1964, points out that if it is beyond doubt that Dardanians were not Thracians they may very well be classified among the Illyrians.
- 14 F.Papazoglu, *Les royaumes d'Illyrie et de Dardanie, Origines et development, structures, hellenisation et romanization* in "Iliri i Albanci", Belgrade 1988, p.174.
- 15 Vl.J.Georgiev, *The Illyrians and Their Neighbours* 1st Convention of Illyrian Studies, Tirana 1974, p.54.
- 16 A.Buda, *op.cit.* p.34.
- 17 B.Jubani, *Features of Illyrian Culture in the Territory of Dardania*, "Illyria", 2, 1985, pp.211-219.
- 18 S.Islami, *The Illyrian State - Ist Place and Role in the Mediterranean World* 1st Convention of Illyrian Studies, I, Tirana 1974, pp. 85-105.
- 19 A.Evans, *Antiquarian Researches in Illyricum* Archeologia XLIX, Westminster 1883, p.62.
- 20 M.Garasanin, *Illyrians and Albanians* "Kosovo, Past and Present", Belgrade 1989, pp.33-38.
- 21 F.Papazoglu, *Les royaumes d'Illyrie* ... p.194.
- 22 See the opinions of P.Cabanes, *Les Illyriens* pp.227-229; N.Ceka, *Survey of the Development of Urban Life Among Southern Illyrians*, "Illyria", 2, 1985, pp.119-136.
- 23 V.Toçi, *New Data About the Illyrian Onomastics in Durrhachium*, "Illyria" 1, 1986, pp.123-135.



24 S. Anamali, *Les Illyriens et les villes de l'Illyrie du Sud dans les inscriptions de la Grèce. Modes de contacts et processus de transformation dans les sociétés anciennes* (Actes du colloque de Cortone 24-30 mai 1981), Pise-Rome 1983; O. Masson, *Quelques noms Illyriens, "L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité"* (Actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand, 22-25 octobre 1984), Edition Adosa, Clermont-Ferrand 1987, pp. 115-117; P. Roerch, *Y eut-il des rapports entre les Béotiens, les Épirotes et les Illyriens?*, "L'Illyrie méridionale...", pp. 179-183.

25 S. Anamali, *Amantie*, "Illyria", 2, 1972 (French version), pp. 67-148, S. Anamali, *Inscription Data About Some Towns of Southern Illyria*, "Illyria", 6, 1976, pp. 125-130 with an epigr. appendix, *Données épigraphiques sur quelques cités de l'Illyrie du Sud*, Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja, Posebna izdanja, XXIV, Sarajevo, 1975, pp. 172-175. N. Ceka, *The Koinon of the Byllines*, "Illyria", 2, 1984, pp. 61-108; N. Ceka, *Bylline Inscriptions*, "Illyria", 2, 1987, pp. 49-121; A. Mano-B. Dautaj, *An Inscription from Olympe of Illyria*, "Illyria", 2, 1984, pp. 109-118.

26 S. Islami, *Le monnayage de Skodra, Lissus et Genthios (Essai d'une revision du problème)*, "Illyria", 2, 1972, pp. 379-408, gives a list of the magistrates of the city who bear Greek and Illyrian names.

27 D. Rendic-Milošević, *Hellenisticki natpis iz bivše zbirke nadbiskupa Zmajevića u Perastu*, "Arheološki Radovi i Rasprave" (Acta et dissertationes archaeologicae), 10 Zagreb 1987, pp. 155-165.

28 C. Daicoviciu-H. Daicoviciu, *La colonizzazione e la funzione della città nella romanizzazione della Dacia, L'Adriatico tra Mediterraneo e Penisola Balcanica nell'antichità*, Taranto 1983, pp. 205-220.

29 S. Anamali-N. Ceka, *The Latin Inscriptions Found in Albania* (manuscript).

30 T. Mommsen, *The Provinces of the Roman Empire*, vol. 1, Ares Publisher, Chicago, MCMLXXIV, p. 202, 203.

31 F. Papazoglu, *Les royaumes d'Illyrie ...*, p. 19.

32 *The Illyrians and Illyria in the Ancient Authors*, pp. 468-469.

33 On these invasions see K. Frasheri, *Albanian territories in the Early Middle Ages*, at "The National Conference on the formation of the Albanian people, their language and culture"; A. Meksi, *Data about the Early Medieval History of Albania*.

34 P. Lemerle, *Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans depuis la fin de l'époque Romaine jusqu'au VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in "Revue historique", 78, 1954, p. 294.

35 V. Popović, *Aus origines de la slavisation des Balkans, la construction des premières sklavines macédoniennes vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, "Compte-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions", Paris 1980 (map on page 4 on the position of coin hoards in the Balkans).

36 J. Ferluga, *Gli slavi del Sud ed altri gruppi etnici di fronte a Bisanzio*. Settimana di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo, XXX, "Gli slavi occidentali e meridionali nell'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto, 15-21 aprile 1972", Spoleto 1983, p. 318.

37 Quoted according to P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius, II*, Commentaire, Paris 1981, p. 67.

38 P. Mijović, *Problemi issledovanje slavjanskih gorodov v Cernogorii*, in "Rapports du III<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'archéologie slave", Tome 2, Bratislava 1980, p. 274.

39 E. Dobruna, *On some ancient toponyms in Kosova*, "Onomastika e Kosoves", Prishtina 1979, p. 46.

40 J. Ferluga, *op.cit.*, p. 317.

41 The bishop of Durres, a participant in the council of Constantinople, said that he reached the capital not via the Egnatia Road but by sea. For this see G. Ostrogorski, *Byzantine Cities in the Early Middle Ages*, "Dumbarton Oaks Papers", 13, 1959.



42 S. Anamali, *La nécropole de Kruje et la civilisation du Haut Moyen Age en Albanie du Nord*, in "Studia Albanica", 1, 1964, pp. 149-164; *The Question of the Albanian Early Mediaeval Culture in the Light of New Archaeological Discoveries*, in "Studime Historike", 2, 1967, pp. 29-40; H. Spahiu, *The Arber graveyard at the Dalmaca Castle*, in "Iliria", 9-10, pp. 23-45; D. Komata, *The Arber grave-yard of Shurdhah*, in "Iliria", 9-10, 1979-1980, pp. 105-121; F. Prendi, *A grave-yard of the Arber culture in Lezha*, in "Iliria", 9-10, 1979-1980, pp. 123-170.

43 I. Rajteric-Sivec, *Stand der Mittelalterlichen archaologischen Forschungen in Albanien nach dem II Weltkrieg*, "Arheoloski Vestnik XXV", 1974, Ljubljana 1976, pp. 561-568; J. Kovacevic, *Sloveni i staro balkansko stanovništvo*, Material IX, "Simposium srednje vekovne sekcije arheoloskog drustva Jugoslavije" Prilep 1970, Belgrade 1972, p. 65.

44 Z. Vinsky, *Autochthone Kulturelemente zur Zeit der slawischen Landname des Balkanraums*, Symposium "Predslavenski etnicki elementi u Balkanu u etnogenezi juznih slovena", Sarajevo 1969, p. 189.

45 V. Popovic, *Aux origines de la slavisation des Balkans; la constitution des premières sklavines macédoniennes vers la fin du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, pp. 230-257. He writes as follows: "As has been correctly noted, we are speaking of a local civilization in which the Avar or Slav element could not have occupied a place of more than secondary importance, where the Byzantine products are represented better in the place near the coast, becoming rarer or totally absent in the interior of the country." He has presented his new theory in the works; *Byzantins, Slaves et autochthones dans les provinces de Prévalitane et Nouvelle Epire*, Villes et peuplement dans L'Illyricum protobyzantin, Ecole française de Rome, 1984, pp. 181-243; *Albanija u kasnoj antici* (L'Albanie pendant la Basse Antiquité); "Ilirci i albanci", Belgrade 1988, pp. 202-283.

46 See the illustrated catalogu of this museum, *Archéologie comparée Afrique, Europe occidentale et centrale*, Paris 1982 (Yugoslavie-Albanie), in which the inventory from the graves discovered in 1898 by A. Degrand, the French consul in Shkodra, is presented.

47 A. Meksi, *The Churches of Central and Northern Albania*, "The Monuments" 1, 1984, p. 109; see also *Acta Albanica*, 1, 113.

48 N. Doda, *The Arber Graves of Prosek in Mirdita Region*, in "Illyria" 1, 1989, p.

49 H. Spahiu - D. Komata, *Shurdhah-Sarda, a Mediaeval Fortified Town*, "Iliria", 3, 1975, p. 249.

50 A. Meksi, *The Churches of Albania*....pp. 109-111.

51 M. Garasanin, *Considerations finales*, p. 372, again deals in a mistaken way with the problem of the Koman culture, saying more or less what V. Popovic has said that "the necropolises of the Koman type are linked with the church urban centres of the epoch under the Byzantine rule. They belong to a Romanized population, the Romans whom Constantine Porphyrogenetes mentions and who during his reign had sought refuge in Dalmatia and the environs of Dyrrachium." In connection with the latter claim we point out that Constantine Porphyrogenetes was emperor from 913 to 959, i.e. after the decline of the Koman culture, and if there were fugitives from the so-called Roman population, there were certainly very few of them and could not have altered the ethnic population of such an extensive territory as that of the district of Dyrrachium, let alone that of the Koman culture.

52 S. Anamali, *The Problem of the Formation of the Albanian people in the Light of Archaeological Information*, "The National Conference on the formation of the Albanian people, their language and culture", Tirana 1988, p. 347, 348 and op.cit. therein.

53 J. Kovacevic, *Babas*, Zbornik povesten na B. Babic, Prilep 1986, pp. 119-121, fig. 121.



## THE PROBLEM OF THE AUTOCHTHONY OF ALBANIANS IN THE LIGHT OF PLACE-NAMES(\*)

The question whether the Albanians are native in their present territories or not, since it was touched on by Thunmann in 1774 and more extensively dealt with by Hahn in 1854 has been constantly examined by historians and linguists. Over more than a century, since the publishing of Hahn's masterwork to this day, so many opinions have been expressed on this question that we think it must be treated summarily once again. Scholars' opinions, as we shall see, diverge so much that often they are remote from the truth. So the historian of the Albanian language has to take a stand towards them.

Norbert Jokl considers the autochthony of Albanians the fundamental problem of their pre-history. I think that this problem is closely connected with the Albanians' origin and language, for if they are autochthonous, it follows that they live on these territories at least since the Antiquity and are, strictly speaking, the descendants of the Illyrians. On the other hand, if they are newcomers, the historical possibilities of their Illyrian origin vanish altogether. So, this problem is related to the whole Albanian history and to the ethnography and palaeontology of the Balkan Peninsula.

Before we approach this subject, we must be clear about what the autochthony of the Albanians means. Certainly, we do intend to affirm that it is an autochthony stretching over all times, from the remote pre-history. This is impossible, because, just as the other Indo-European peoples, the Albanians, too have come to their present territories in ancient times. So the question is not about absolute autochthony. Although this problem may be examined beginning from the bronze and iron ages, considering it from the language standpoint and the data of pre-historic archaeology. For reasons of method we shall deal with it only within these terms: Have the Albanians been living uninterruptedly on these territories since the Greek and Roman times or not? The autochthony of the historical period has concrete importance for the question of the origin of Albanians, because Illyrian tribes are known to have lived in Albania since the Greco-Roman time. Such time delimitation provides an answer also to the theories which deny the autochthony, as they too, assume the Antiquity as their starting point.

The question is related both to the ancient history of the Albanian people and to the pre-history of their language. So both historians and linguists have been involved in the elucidation of this problem. Before entering into detail and considering the opinions of scholars one by one, we may summarily mention the stands they have assumed in general. For the last century scholars it was an evident assumption that the Albanians were autochthonous in Albania since ancient times, so they have accepted it a priori. Many scholars of this century, especially the last generation of them, are of quite the opposite opinion. According to some historians and many linguists, the Albanians are not native on their territories. They are relative newcomers to present-day Albania, from more distant regions according to some scientists, and from less distant ones, according to others. The reasons brought forward for this assumption are less of an historical nature than of a linguistic one. Among the main arguments are the two following: the Albanian-Rumanian connection and the place names of Albania. The close connections of the Albanian with the Rumanian lead to the supposition that the peoples who spoke these languages must have lived in vicinity in some region of the Balkan Peninsula. To many scholars this region lies somewhere in the centre of the Peninsula (Weigand thinks of the triangle Nish-Sofia-Shkup) (1), with the Romanians living more to the south-west and the Albanians living more to the east and north-east. This is to many scholars an affirmation that the Albanians have come to Albania in historical times. Many scholars are of the opinion that the present form of many place names in Albania, which are known since ancient times,



indicate a lack of Albanian continuity. Before analysing this question, which is the subject of this article, we must first examine the stand of various scholars on the question of the continuity of the Albanian element.

Thunmann and Hahn's opinion is that the Albanians live on the territories of the ancient Illyrians and there is no information of their having come late migration to these regions; so they are native and Illyrian in essence. Hahn, in particular, as we said above, tried to back up his thesis with the means science had at its disposal in his time: on the one hand, relating the information from ancient sources to the present ethnographic situation of Albania, and, on the other hand, explaining a number of ancient names like *Dalmatia*, *Ulcinium*, *Dardania* by means of modern Albanian. If we consider Hahn's work from the standpoint of the present-day level of science we must admit the fact that, despite its shortcomings which are due more to the time in which he worked (Indo-European comparative linguistics had not yet been born), it is on a whole correct in its method and has yielded results which, to a great extent, remain valid to this day. Among the linguists who were for the autochthony of the Albanians, Paul Kretschmer is outstanding.(2) H.Pedersen notes that K.Pauli and H.Hirt accept a Thracian migration in the Middle Ages, about which history is silent.(3) A similar stand is taken also by the Italo-Albanian linguist Marco La Piana (4) who passed away in May 1958, as well as the Italian linguists F.Ribezzo. (5) Milan v. Sufflay is also a supporter of the thesis of the Albanians' autochthony. According to this scientist, even if we had no historic records such as those of Ptolemy about the Illyrian tribe of the Albanoi, the traces of the linguistic influence of the Latin on the Albanian would be sufficient to locate the Albanian settlement on the Adriatic coast.

Let us now see what those scientists, who believed that the Albanians are newcomers, thought about all this.

According to Constantin Jurecek, (6) the half-romanized Illyrians migrated from the mountain regions between Dalmatia and the Danube to the south. However, in a previous work, in 1879 (7) he is of opinion that the Albanians are autochthonous: "The Albanians of the Early Middle Ages were a half-romanized autochthonous belligerent mountain people. Whereas in the other provinces of the Roman Empire the local population gradually, with the passage of time, was Romanized, the inhabitants of the Albanian mountains stopped halfway, at an incomplete stage of Romanization in the end of the Antiquity". This opinion seems to have been approved by Kr.Sandfeld, too.(8)

Rumanian scientists have dealt with the problem of the Albanians' autochthony and this is obvious because the problem of the Balkan cradle of the Albanians is closely connected also with the problem of the Balkan cradle of the Rumanians. Rumanian scientists think that the Albanians are newcomers to Albania. According to Vasila Parvan (9) (1910) between the 3rd and the 6th century A.D. the Albanians left their settlements in the north-east (the Carpatians) and then moved through Transilvania in south-western direction and gradually, as nomadic herdsmen entered the regions south of the Danube without being noticed.S.Puscariu has tried to back up this thesis with linguistic arguments, but Spitzer has tried to back up this thesis with linguistic arguments, but Spitzer has opposed it (10). Among other linguists, Theodor Capidan, too, (11) on linguistic ground, comes to the conclusion that the Albanians formerly lived in the northern parts of the Balkan Peninsula. A.Prokopovic thinks more or less the same.(12) According to Philippides, (13) the Albanians have descended from Pannonia. Here al. Rossetti's objective stand is worth mentioning.(14)

H.Baric is of the opinion that the Albanians have come from the Balkan and Rhodope mountains, (15) and Weigand, as we said above, located their origin in the triangle Nish-Sofje-Shkup. A.Dabinovic, too, negates the autochthony of the Abanians in an utterly baseless manner.(16) The ethnographer J.Erdeljanovic, in particular, has risen against Weigand's theory. (17) This scientist notes that Weigand's opinion about the distant migrations of the



Albanians is corroborated by no document. On the contrary, the great differences between the Ghegs and Tosks in language and customs prove that the Albanians live in their territories since ancient times.

Norbert Jokl's opinion has attracted the attention of science. His intermediate stand on the origin of the Albanian language is well known: accordingly, his stand on the problem of the autochthony of the Albanians is similar. Jokl leans towards Hahn and against Parvan and Weigand, so he is for the autochthony of the Albanians. However, he modifies Hahn's theory to a certain extent, suggesting that, true, the Albanians are autochthonous on their present-day territories, but not precisely in today's Albania, but somewhere more to the East.

How does this scientist see the problem? Jokl proceeds from some linguistic premises: Albanian place-names speak against the continuity of the Albanians on their present territories; their fishing vocabulary, as he sees it, is to a large extent foreign. According to these criteria, in his opinion, the territory on which the Albanians formerly lived does not coincide with their present ones, in former times the Adriatic coast was not included in the territory of the Albanians. Positively speaking, the Albanians' ancient cradle is a territory within the sphere of Romanization on which the Illyrians and the Thracians met. It must be near the cradle of the Rumanians, but not too near the influence of the Greek, though not outside its sphere. Taking all these criteria into account, Jokl concludes: the ancient cradle of the Albanians in the Balkans must be Dardania.(18) From here they moved westwards to their present territories, in the late Latin period. He developed this opinion later.

In this way, according to historical toponomatics, he came to the conclusion (19) that "with their migration to the coastal regions in the vicinity of Buena, the Slavs found an Albanian population there". Baric reiterated this opinion recently (20), especially in opposition to Seliscev. The priority of this opinion belongs to Jokl, and all I.Popovic's affirmations to the contrary (21) are utterly wrong.

Petar Skok, to a certain extent, accepts Jokl's opinion. According to him, north-western Albania does not at all come into consideration as an ancient Albanian region and that their cradle must be sought in Dardania. (22) Prior to him Mrs E.Durham had expressed the same idea. (23)

Max Vasmer has brought forward his reservations against these theories. (24) Georg Stadtmueller especially has expressed himself against Jokl's thesis in the recent years. (25) According to this scientist, Dardania cannot be the ancient cradle of the Albanians, because in early Roman and Byzantine times this region was certainly totally Romanized. According to him the Albanians have coalesced into a nation in a place which, on one hand, was exposed to the influence of Dalmatia, from which they took the Christian faith, and, on the other hand, they were not far from the boundary of the Greek language. A place that fulfils these conditions is, according to him, North Albania (Mat). This region surrounded by high mountains and, consequently, protected by nature is the ancient cradle of the Albanians. There they formed themselves into a people and escaped romanization. The Albanians here were shepherds of high mountain pastures and thence spread to the surrounding plains; from here in the Middle Ages they moved south to Central and Southern Albania and later to Thessaly and the other regions of Greece. C.Tagliavini opposes this thesis pointing out that it relies on negative arguments and provides no positive argument for its confirmation.(26)

This is how the problem of the autochthony of the Albanians stand at the present level of science. Summarily speaking, we think that we must turn to the old opinion of Thunmann and Hahn, who say that the Albanians are autochthonous. Inversely, we think that those scientists are wrong who think that the Albanians are newcomers to their present territories: whether from distant or neighbouring regions, whether in ancient times or in the Middle Ages. It is true that the ancient history of Albania is shrouded in darkness. However, one thing can be said with certainty against these theories: there are no documents to prove that the Albanians are newcomers to Albania from another region of the Balkans. Hence, these theories lack, first of



all, an historical basis. On the other hand, the theory of the Albanians' autochthony, represented by Thunmann and Hahn and, later on, other scientists like Kretschmer and Sufflay, need not to be proved. Stadtmueller's opinion that the cradle of the Albanians must probably be located in North Albania seems too narrow to us. This cradle must not have been too small. Certainly North Albania, too, is the cradle of the Albanians, but only part of it. It must also have included other Albanian regions, in Central and Southern Albania. The present Albanian-inhabited regions are not an area of expansion, but rather an area of restriction, the conclusion of a constant shrinking, in the course of the history of the Albanians.

As for reasons of a linguistic character, which are said to speak against the autochthony of the Albanians, we shall take up the more important of them: Toponomastics. We shall not go into detail on this so important a problem for the ancient history of the Albanians and their language, but shall only take a general view and see what evidence emerges from these quarters.

A systematic collection and a scientific treatment of Albanian toponomastic is still lacking. On the other hand, it is true that a great part of the known place names are of foreign origin. This is a vivid testimony to the various peoples who have lived in Albania. Still it is an evidence belonging to historical times, and more often than not, to relatively recent historical processes. These names do not provide an unequivocal answer to the question: Are the Albanians indigenous or newcomers to their territories? In other words, these names do not tell us who has lived first in this country. Hence the method applied by Weigand of taking the map of Albanian and finding a number of foreign names, without taking into consideration the time to which they belong, and forth with saying that the Albanians are not the first inhabitants of this country, is methodically wrong. All place names cannot be assessed all in the same manner. Positive results cannot be achieved without making some distinctions of a chronological character. In this sense, village names tell us nothing about the ancient history of the country, because villages in the Balkans, and more so in Albania, are generally only a few centuries old; with the uninterrupted wars that have been waged on these territories many villages have been destroyed and new ones built instead. Towns are older, so their names must be more ancient. A particularly conservative group is made up of names of rivers and, in general, waterways. It has been noticed that such names remain even when a country changes its population; usually the new population takes up the names of rivers from the local inhabitants.

The best approach would be to take the names of cities, rivers and mountains from the ancient sources and compare them with the present forms. The differences resulting from the comparison are then examined to ascertain whether the names have passed through the mouth of the Albanian-speaking population or some other people. If the names form a continuity according to the rules of Albanian phonetic evolution, that is, an uninterrupted linguistic tradition, then the Albanians are native on the Albanian territories since ancient times. If the present forms are not explained within the rules of the Albanian language and historical phonetics, then it follows that the Albanians have adopted these names from other people, which leads to the conclusion that the Albanians are newcomers to these territories.

From a comparison of ancient and present forms of place-names I have formed the conviction that they show the opposite of what some scholars say, i.e., the place of the ancestors of the Albanians does not coincide with the territories on which the Albanians live today. The present forms of these names can be explained only by means of the specific features of the evolution of the Albanian language. Without entering into a historical-linguistic analysis of these names and by simply putting forward the results of my research, here under I will examine some place-names: besides Naissus: *Nish* which N. Jokl has treated, we have a number of other couples: *Scardus* mons : *Shar*; *Scupi* : *Shkup*; *Scodra*: *Shkoder*; *Lissus*: *Lesh*; *Drivastum*: *Drisht*; *Dyrrhachium* : *Durres*; *Candavia*: *Kunavja* : river names *Drinus* : *Dri*, *Drin*; *Barbana* : *Buene*; *Mathis* : *Mat*; *Isammus fluvius* (in *Vivius Sequester*): *Ishm*. In *Scardus*: *Shar* we notice immediately that the Slav liquid sounds are absent, while it is present in the case of



*Scardona of Dalmatia*, today as *Skradin*. In *Scodra : Shkoder* Jokl says that the supposition that this place-name has continuously existed in Albanian speech from pre-Roman time is not compatible with the results of the Albanian historic phonetics (the initial part of the name and the consonant group in the stem of the word appear in a different form from parallel cases in purely Albanian words which have an uninterrupted existence). Again according to this scholar, the place name *Rogami:Rogame* (one near Shkodra and the other in the upper valley of Valbona in an extended form as *Rogomana* in Luma, which appears also in Montenegro, without being a Slav name) retains the intervocalic *g* is proof against the Albanian continuity in these parts. (27) In my opinion these two names cannot be taken as sufficient proof. This scholar's suggestion that the initial part of the name Shkodra in the mouth of the Albanian ought to have given an *h*, as in the ancient native Albanian names ( *hudher* - Gr. *Σκλοροδον* ), is not valid since the phonetic change *sk : h* belongs to a very ancient Albanian period, before they came into contact with the Roman world, or still further back in the time when the ancestors of the Albanians were on the road to the Balkans. On the contrary, the change of the old form *Shkodra* into the present *Shkoder* is quite in order with the Albanian phonetics; we find the same phenomenon in *Scupi : Shkup*. As for the ending *-der* of Shkoder, from Pederson to date, especially on the basis of the word *djerse* from *swidrotja*, *swiderotja*, it is accepted that the group *dr der* of the Indo-European heritage has given an *r* in the Albanian language. (28) This reduction in a specific position, in close proximity with many consonants, in my opinion does not categorically prove that the syllable *-der -dra* of *Shkoder Shkodra* must have produced *-re* in Albanian.

Examining the phonetic evolution from ancient times, the group *-dr-*, according to me, is evident in the case of *kulsheider - kuçeder*, which, as G.Mayer (29) says, is derived from Lat. *chersydrus* - Gr. *Χερσυδρος* cf. also *ballader* (ujevare) - waterfal), which I think is derived from ancient Greek *βαρυρον* (abyss). The name *Rogame*, too, does not seem as proof against the Albanian continuity in these territories. This name in different forms is nothing other than an extension with an *-ame*, of the word *roge rroge* (grassy place in a clearing; small valley), which Jokl links with old High German *riuti*, modern German *Reute* (+clearing) (30) which I approximate with the verb *rruaj*, as a formation with the suffix *-g*. Therefore, the name *roge* must be relatively new and so is the extension *Rogame*. The history of *roge : Rogame* has a corresponding couple in *dege-degame*. In both extensions with *-ame*, the intervocalic *-g-* is not old, therefore this occlusive sound no longer fell in this position. On the contrary, it is known that the disappearance of this sound, according to G.Mayer's (31) and Jokl's (32) researches, is an ancient phenomenon of the Albanian language, and goes back to the Indo-European period as well as to the Albanian of the Roman and Slav time.

In *Barbanna : Buene* Jokl sees the Albanian continuity in this river name from the late Roman time. (33) In the case of *Lissus : Lesh* the gradation of *i* into open *e* is just as well justified as in the Latin loan-words *missa:meshe*, *littera:leter*, *piscis:peshk*, *episcopus:ipeshkv*, etc. Descending further south along the seacoast to *Dyrrhachium : Durres* we presume a proparoxiton basis in *Dyrrhachium* and the value of *u* for the stressed vocal which is common for the whole northwestern and Doric branch of the Greek language, to which the coastal colonies of ancient Albania belong. The same stressing of the frontal part of the words, as in *Dyrrhachium*, must be accepted in *Isamnus : Ishm*. This is valid for *Drivastum:Drisht*. The name of this ancient northern town, today a village, as P.Skok (34) shows, sounded as *Drivastum* in the mouth of the local inhabitants. This name appears for the first time in the 8th century A.D. but it has its origin in the more distant past. (35) The present forms *Durres*, *Ishm*, *Drisht* from *Dyrrhachium*, *Isamnus Drivastum* and some other names confirm H.Krahe's opinion that in the Illyrian had an initial word stress like Germanic, Italic and Celtic. (36) From the Messapian territory cf. *Brundisium* today *Brindisi*. In Illyrian these were proparoxiton words; in Albanian, with the fall of the last syllable, they have become paroxiton words.



In Southern Albania many cities have been destroyed, because this territory was a road of transit for various peoples over a long time. We know that the Roman consul Paulus Aemilius, in 168 B.C., rased to the ground upward of 70 cities in Epirus. Nevertheless, despite all this and the Slav (Bulgarian) invasion and its consequences, here too, the traces of the Albanian continuity are apparently not wiped out. Among the coastal cities, I am not convinced that *Vlona* : *Vlora* is derived from ancient *Αυλών* through a Slav form, as Weigand suggests. Martin Leak (37) was the first to notice that further south we have the name *Çameria*, which is the non-Greek continuation of *Thyamis* (the ancient name of River Kallama). In this case the region has taken its name from the river, the same as in *Mat* : *Matje*. The phonetic evolution *Arachthos* : *Arte* is explained better by means of the Albanian language than the Greek.

With these names of cities, rivers and mountains, from the North to the South, we can explain the continuity of the Albanian language in the coastal zone of the country, which has been insistently denied. The Albanians have never ceased inhabiting this territory, despite the repeated periodical withdrawals to the mountainous regions. As I have mentioned in another occasion, and indicating the necessary sources for this, (38) I believe that in the light of these facts we must re-examine the statements made by some scholars (Jirecek, Bartoli, Sufflay, Weigand Skok; Stadtmueller and others) who sustain that the coastal cities of Northern Albania were inhabited in the Middle Ages by a Roman population and that the Albanians came there only by the 14th century. The name of *Raguza* (*Ragusium*), which in the mouth of the Albanians was *Rush Rushe* (See Pjeter Bogdani 1685, II 20/6), shows that the Adriatic coast was part of the territory inhabited by the ancestors of Albanians beyond the present ethnic borders. In this example too, we see the regular form that follows the rules of Historic Albanian phonetics (the fall of *g* between vowels, the alternation of old *s* into *sh*). The adoption of this name by the Albanians belongs to the time since 614 B.C. (39)

It is worth mentioning here that in some place-names discussed in this article we find the mediaeval intermediary link which connects the ancient form to the present one. Thus, *Ishm* in 1302 appears in sources as *Ysamo* and in Pjeter Budi in 1621 as *Isemi-Ishemi*. The name *Pult* is found in Byzantine authors of the 9th century as *Πολθων* and in the 17th century as *Puletti* (40), and so on. In the couple *Ragusium* : *Rush* the intermediary form of *Rausium* is found in middle Latin. (41)

These are some of the ancient place - names in Albania which carry weight regarding the problem of the autochthony of the Albanians. And if we add that most of such names have been lost without leaving a trace in place-names and that the mediaeval sources still are not thoroughly searched, we can accept that the names with which we can operate today are nothing, but a scanty remain of the former abundance. Most of the names which are brought by other scholars as argument against the Albanian continuity, belong to a later historical stratum. They are proof of the foreign ethnic penetrations into Albania. Without wishing to undervalue the importance of this outside influence, by summing up in this article an idea which I would like to develop more broadly in another occasion, I conclude that there is a continuity of the Albanians in their present territories since ancient times. The old place-names in their present form indicate that this population has continuously inhabited the coasts of the Adriatic from that time until today.



## NOTES

- \* Taken from "Buletini i Universitetit Shteteror te Tiranes", seria e shkencave shoqerore, No 2, 1958, pp.54-62.
- 1 Balkan-Archiv III (1927) 227 and vv.
  - 2 Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache (1896, 262 vv).
  - 3 Zeitschrift fur vergleichende Sprachforschung 36, 299.
  - 4 Studi linguistici albanesi I (1939) 155.
  - 5 Revista d'Albania I (1940) 121 ff.II (1941) 341 v.
  - 6 Historia e Serbeve I (1911) 152.
  - 7 Die Handelsstrassen und Bergwerke von Serbien und Bosnien wahrend des Mittelalters,
- 16.
- 8 Linguistique balkanique 143 vv.
  - 9 Zeitschrift f. rom. Phil., Beihefte 27, 61.
  - 10 Mitteilungen des Rum. Institute Wien I (1914) 292 vv.
  - 11 Dacoromania II (1922) 487 vv.
  - 12 Ibidem, IV (1924-26) 38 vv.
  - 13 Origine Rom. Inilor II 800/vv.
  - 14 Istoria limbii romane III 34 vv.
  - 15 O uzajemnim odnosima balkanskih jezika I 27.
  - 16 Slavonic and East-European Review 26, 393 ff; cfr Jokl, Indogerm Jahrbuch XXIV
- VII 26, 27.
- 17 Makedonski Srbi 19 v.
  - 18 Eberts Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte I (1924) 91 ff; Indogerm. Forschungen 44, 16,
- 46, 383.
- 19 Indogerm. Forschungen 50 (1932) 41 ff; Slavia XIII (134-35) 287.
  - 20 Introduction to the history of the Albanian language 1955, 48.
  - 21 Jeta e Re (Prishtina) VI (1954) 45.
  - 22 Zeitschrift fur Ortsnamenforschung IV 205.
  - 23 Man 23 (1923) 39 vv.
  - 24 Zeitschrift fur slv. Philologie V 286 vv.
  - 25 Archivum Europae Centro - Orientalis VII (1941) 33, 84 vv. 94 vv. 118 vv.
  - 26 Revista d'Albania III (1942) 261.
  - 27 Eberts Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte I 85 v.
  - 28 Zeitschrift fur vergleichende Sprachforschung 36, 288, Philologies II, 112.
  - 29 Indogerm. Forschungen 7, 107.
  - 30 Zeitschrift fur Ortsnamenforschung X 188.
  - 31 Alb. Studien III 37.
  - 32 Indogerm. Forschungen 36, 103; Linguistisch-kulturhistorische Untersuchungen 131
- v., Symbolae linguisticae Rozwadowski, 243.
- 33 Indogerm. Forschungen 50, 33 vv. Slavia XIII 286 v., Glotta XXV 121 vv.
  - 34 Arhiv za arbansku staninu I 10 v., 25.
  - 35 Cf. Sufflay, Stadte und Burgen Albaniens hauptsachlich wahrend des Mittelalters 26.
  - 36 Indogerm. Sprachwissenschaft (1943) 34.
  - 37 Researches in Greece (1814) 13.
  - 38 "Buletin per shkencat shoqerore" 2 (1955) 75.
  - 39 Cf Jokl. Slavia XIII 292, 644.
  - 40 Cf my notes in "Buletin per shkencat shoqerore" 1 (1956) 127.
  - 41 Safarik te Diefenbach, Volkerkunde Osteuropas II 80.



## EVERY STORY ABOUT THE BALKANS BEGINS WITH THE ILLYRIANS(\*)

... Neither the past nor, indeed, the present of the Balkans can be studied without recognition of the Illyrians. Everything that has occurred since the Mediaeval period has been built in some way on that stratum which we call Illyrian. Hence, every story about the Balkans begins with the Illyrians...

... Up to the end of the Second World War, the so-called Albanian Illyrology was virtually non-existent. True, the occasional popular article was published, but without a proper scientific level. In more recent times, though, the situation has changed completely : Albanology has made and is making contributions which no Illyrologist who is seriously engaged in this sphere can ignore. Indeed, today we cannot study the Illyrians without knowing what the Albanian experts have said. So, if 30 years ago some experts in Europe strove to investigate their Illyrological problems without knowing Albanology, today this is impossible. As you are well aware, in the period when this ancient people existed, the present political boundaries did not exist; therefore, everything that Albanology does to throw light on the Illyrians has significance for all the others and, especially, for the peoples of the Balkans. I think that today it is essential for all experts who wish to work purely on Illyrology to know the Albanian language.

The Illyrians belong not only to the past, they are living with us to this day. The Illyrian is still alive in the Balkans. To engage today in a study of the history of the peoples of the Balkans and to fail to acquaint oneself with the Illyrian cultural substratum, is something quite impossible. Precisely because of this, today the Illyrians are a contemporary theme, not only of the Balkans but also of Europe. A study of the Illyrian element in the present-day cultures of the Balkans has immense significance. Without its knowledge, present-day Balkan life and culture cannot be known. Therefore, one of the problems which poses itself as a key one in Illyrology is that of the relationship of Illyrian to Albanian culture and that of the Southern Slav peoples. That continuity, that cultural linkage between Illyrian pre-historic cultures and those of the Roman period and contemporary cultures in the Balkans-this is one of the most complicated ones facing Illyrology today. In their study of Illyrian-Albanian continuity the Albanians have provided a series of answers to numerous questions and have made considerable progress, while in our country this question has been rather neglected for a long period, although recently more has begun to be said and written about the Illyrian elements in the cultures of the southern Slav peoples. At the present time this has importance, even political importance, because if this problem is to be politicized, then one must know how to do so. All the peoples who are living today in the Balkans have Illyrian elements, which ought to unite and not divide them.

True, the Illyrian question and that of the ethnogenesis of the Albanians has been politicized quite unnecessarily in the recent period. We have adequate evidence that the Illyrians were not wiped out with the arrival of the Romans or even later. Hence, to believe that the Illyrians were eliminated from the face of the earth through the coming of the Slavs is quite senseless. There were not so many Slavs or indeed other peoples who came to the Balkans in the early Middle Ages. They had come to places with which they were little acquainted and were obliged to assimilate the mode of habitation and many other things from this ancient people. Therefore, the Illyrian element remained there. There is not the slightest doubt about this, and today we are able to identify those elements. However, let us return to the recent politicization which seems to wish to deny the relations of the Illyrians and, in some way also, of the



Albanians with the other peoples in the Balkans. It seems to be forgotten, or rather as if somebody wants it to be forgotten, that the Illyrians remain not only in the territory where the Albanians live today but all over the Western Balkans. Hence, those who deny the Illyrian origin of the Albanians do this not for the sake of science, not because they have any scientific argument, but proceeding from other motives, which are really remote, very remote, from the scientific truth. Nobody in Yugoslavia or in the world who seriously studies the problem of the Illyrians denies the origin of the Albanians directly from them. With reliable proofs and material evidence, Albanology has confirmed the connection of the ancient Illyrian culture with that of Mediaeval Albania. The archaeologists have discovered a number of localities of the 7th and 8th centuries, which clearly fill that gap which could not be filled completely from the written historical sources. Hence, today it is incontestable that not only cultural but also ethnic continuity exists between the Illyrians and the Albanians.

It is true that among the Albanians, as among all other peoples, numerous transformations have taken place, which have resulted in an alteration of their ethnic entity. There are no pure peoples in the world and the Albanians are not pure, either. However, it is beyond doubt that, more than most, the Albanians have retained the Illyrian elements in their ethnic make-up. In the other regions of the Western Balkans, the new element i.e. the Slav, predominates. Among the Albanians the Illyrian element predominates, and this can no longer be contested. Any attempt to ignore the ethnogenesis of the Albanians from the Illyrians is not based on science, but is a manipulation of science. I have not heard any expert who denies the origin of the Albanians from the Illyrians. What certain journalists who know nothing about this problem write is another matter. After all, they can say and write what they like, because they have no scientific responsibility. Regardless of this, if one wants to politicize the Illyrian problem (and any problem can be politicized), then one must know how to do so. The report, which I wrote for the 2nd Convention of Illyrian Studies held two months ago in Tirana, is devoted to the presence of Illyrian elements all over the Balkans. This is like an ethnic substratum which, as I said earlier, is present in all these peoples. It can never be an element of division, but one of unification. Therefore, if we want to politicize it, let us do it in such a manner that this element will be a factor for unity of the peoples of the Western Balkans today. I have also taken up the special task of writing about the Illyrian presence among the Croats. In a few months such a study will be completed and included in a large collection of works devoted to the Croatian culture. Today the presence of Illyrian influence in the material and spiritual culture of the Croats can be identified. Evidence of this influence is encountered more and more frequently the further one goes to the south and southwest. In this part of the Balkans, the Illyrian cultural elements are present more frequently, much more than we thought previously. So, according to this, many regions can say, that we, too, have something Illyrian in our origin.

One day we shall investigate all the Illyrian evidence in the entire territory of the Western Balkans and say : here the Slav element predominates, and because of certain circumstances, this or that people have become Slavs, while there, there were not enough Slavs for them to be able to impose their language and culture, and therefore, the culture of the local inhabitants has remained predominant.

It can be seen clearly that regardless of their distinctions, all these tribes, or, as we call them, peoples, who lived in the western part of the Balkans and whom we call Illyrians, had many elements in common on the basis of which the Illyrians can be spoken of as a "league", a whole body made up of different tribes with sufficient common traits. According to this, their cultures, too, have had so many common elements that we can speak of an Illyrian culture containing several sub-cultures, we can speak in the same way about the Illyrian state. There were several state formations in Southern Illyria which were more advanced, although the other Illyrian tribes, too, which did not develop so quickly, had their state formations.



It is known that in the Bronze Age some Illyrian tribes, the Messapians, the Iapyges, the Peuketes, and others, crossed over to Southern Italy. Therefore, one can speak of the influence of Illyrian culture in that part of Italy. Likewise it is known that the Liburni had political and cultural influence in the central part of Italy. The Illyrians also had influence in Northern Italy, because of the links of the Northern Italians and the Etruscans with the sources of raw materials in the Illyrian zones in present-day Slovenia. Those influences were from both sides; therefore, it cannot be said that the Illyrians only gave, because they also received. Those cultural elements which came from Illyria can be easily identified today. Likewise the Illyrians exerted an influence on present-day Rumania, too. We know of a Bessarabian culture which was under the powerful influence of the Illyrian culture. This culture today might be called the culture of the prehistoric period. Later, the Illyrians, as a very important element in the Roman Empire, especially in the province of Dalmatia, played a crucial role. During the so-called Illyrian Renaissance, the Illyrian culture was the most influential in everything that occurred in the cultural sphere.

The problem of the geographical distribution of the Illyrians is linked with that of their origin. Without going into details, I shall say that for us today there is reliable evidence about the geographical extension of the Illyrians. This source is Appianus whom we have no reason to disbelieve. He confirms that the Illyrians lived from Epirus to the Danube. Our archaeologists and philologists have a narrower idea of this territory on account of various peoples, especially the Pannonians, in the northern part of the Balkans. I think no strong elements contest what Appianus says. Until some method is found by means of which the boundaries of the Illyrians can be fixed exactly, we must necessarily believe the man who lived at that time and who knew the problem much better than we do today. When we speak about the Illyrians today we think about a territory extending from the Alps and the Danube in the north, the Morava to the south, and then a little more southwards than the extent of present-day Albania ...

#### NOTE

\* Abridged from *Bota e Re*, Prishtina 1985.



**ON THE ILLYRIAN ANTHROPONYMY AND THE ETHNOGENESIS  
OF THE ALBANIANS(\*)**

The country which welcomed us with hospitality, naturally presents a special interest for these studies, because no other territory is linked more closely than this with the ancient Illyrian world. Recent research, especially that of F. Papazoglu, has revealed the real and historically differentiated content of this name, bringing out clearly the fundamental links which unite it closely with the land inhabited by the Albanian people today.

It is a territory where the persistence of survivals strikes the eye of every careful observer. On the other hand, this is characteristic of the Balkan region where continual, frequent and even catastrophic changes did not succeed in wiping out the characteristic features of a remote antiquity. Therefore, the Illyrian complex, in its normal appearance at the time of the Roman Empire, constitutes for all the peoples of present-day Yugoslavia a chapter of their national history. And this is not only from the geographic viewpoint. In a narrow sense, however, and at first glance, the Illyrian ethnos is included in the national history of the Albanian people, in particular.

Mainly thanks to the contribution of the Albanian linguistics, represented in the first place by Çabej's scientific works, can now see that even reputable linguists have frequently been hasty in their conclusions about the origin the Albanian language. Çabej has shown, that all the arguments presented against an Illyrian origin of Albanian, through which it was intended to prove the impossibility of an explanation of linguistic links, cannot withstand a profound critical examination carried out in the light of all known facts. There are no convincing linguistic reasons which can compel us to rule out the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language.

Naturally, this does not mean that all the arguments presented against such an origin are without significance and that this question does not rise problems any longer. The rejection of these arguments has been useful for the history of the Albanian language and Balkan linguistics. However, since the other alternative, that is, the Thracian origin, cannot be determined through the normal linguistic criteria, it becomes much less likely; the Illyrian alternative is not ruled out for strong reasons, while the linguistic territory of the Albanian language remains entirely within the Illyrian territory, at least according to the present state of our knowledge.

Çabej has brought out this fact very well and clearly, and thus has provided a sound methodological basis for any discussion about the origin of the Albanian language and, because of its geographical position and since there is no proof against it, the Illyrian origin remains the most credible solution. This is the viewpoint from which we must examine the claims of the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language.

This fact of the geographical extension is not by any means decisive. It simply makes such a hypothesis more credible. The investigations may throw much light on this question and provide detailed arguments only about the external links, and that is as far as we can go. There is no doubt that onomastic studies can help clarify this complex question.

Hitherto, only the ancient toponymy has been taken into account. The question arises whether the modern forms of ancient toponyms in present-day Albania testify to a linguistic continuity or to an interruption. This is decisive for the possibility of determining the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language. The anthroponyms have been studied virtually only for etymological affinities which are of little value.

However, it is possible to use the onomastic data about the question of the origin of



Albanian in an entirely new way, along with the important geographical arguments. The very systematic investigations into the local anthroponymy of the Illyrian provinces of the Roman Empire, on which I have been engaged for about 10 years, show clearly that the Illyrian territory can be defined accurately with onomastic evidence.

During Roman occupation, the evidence of early inscriptions shows that there was a type of anthroponymy used among the local people in the territory between the mouth of the Hippius (Cetina) and the border of the Epirus, that is, Cape Acroceraunia. In the interior of the peninsula, this onomastic extended apparently to the mountains which divide the Adriatic basin from that of the Danube and the Black Sea. It seems that the ancient stratum of the Dardanian anthroponymy belonged to this area.

Some of the characteristic names of this type of anthroponymy are Anna, Gentius, Glavus, Grapus, Epicadus, Monnunius, Pleuratus, Teutana and Verzo. Some of them are well-known in Illyrian history, in the precise meaning this term has assumed in recent research. Hence, this type of onomastics is connected with the Illyrian historical entity. It would not be unduly bold if we called it Illyrian in a concrete, well-defined and, indeed, ethnological sense.

Territorial distribution of Illyrian anthroponymy, in so far as it has been possible to define it here, corresponds almost in detail to the linguistic territory of the Albanian language. In the northwest, however, it extends much further and enters deep into the territory of the Yugoslav Republics of Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, that is, in the Serbo-Croat linguistic territory. It is difficult to say whether the opinion that some of these districts have remnants of an Albanian ethnic presence in the Middle Ages should be considered correct.

In any case, the Illyrian anthroponymic territory indicates that the Albanian language did not originate from an extensive and defined Illyrian territory, from but a clearly defined territory in which it was formed. In the light of these onomastic facts, the Albanian territory is no longer as a survival of something different, but it is a living entity which constitutes a constant factor in historical life and in the ethnic context of the Balkans.

In this way, the Illyrian-Albanian continuity gains a new dimension. No longer a confused and undefined ethnological abstraction, it is possible to grasp its historical reality and to see its true ethnic shape which constitutes the substratum of this continuity.

Geographical data provide even more detailed arguments to support the Illyrian origin of the Albanian language. The possibility that it is accurate is greatly increased. On the whole, our ideas about the ethnogenesis of the Albanians are losing a little of their vagueness as generalizations. Thanks to the results of onomastic investigations, they are gaining historical flesh and blood.

#### NOTE

\* Abridged from *Illyrian Anthroponomy and Albanian Ethnogenesis*, a report to the 1st Congress of Illyrian Studies, Tirana 1974, pp. 95-98.



## SOME THOUGHTS ON THE EARLY HABITAT OF THE ALBANIANS IN THE BALKAN PENINSULA (\*)

... In the opinion of the Russian Slavist, A.M.Salishev, when the Slavs entered Albania they did not meet any Albanians there but only Romans; therefore, the coming of the Albanians to their historical homeland allegedly occurred in the period after the arrival of the Slavs.

That such an idea of chronological relations is completely wrong is demonstrated by the phonetic character of some ancient toponyms, which shows that they are ancient names the Southern Slavs took over through the Albanian language, because in these toponyms can be seen phonetic changes which had been made in the Albanian language prior to the arrival of the Southern Slavs in Albania. For example, this is the only way to explain the phonetic relationship between the Serbian name of the Buna River, *Bojana*, and the ancient name *Barbanna* (Livy, XLIV, 31,3 )...

For the localization of the early Balkan homeland of the late Albanians, which certainly must have lain to the north of the Greek language zone, from which the most ancient Greek elements were introduced to the Albanian language - in the total absence of any historical information - the only way to define this zone or, more precisely, to define some points of this zone, is provided by the ancient Albanian toponyms, if they had been able to preserve the phonetic character of the Albanian under the Slavonic curtain. One such toponym, undoubtedly, is *Nish*, because the phonetic relations between the ancient form *Naisus* and the Serbian form *Nis* cannot be explained, as some think, with Slavonic means, although *S* may have come only from *S*, because the transition from *ai* to *i* in Slavonic is done only at the end of the word, while in the Albanian language, as Jokl (*Reallexicon der Vorgeschichte*, 1, 126) has shown precisely, this transition is usually explained with the elimination of the *a* before the accent. Likewise, the replacement of *s* with *sh* is normal in Albanian. A clear example of the change of the Albanian *s* to *sh* is found also in ancient Dardania in the Albanian name of the town of Shkup, where *u* shows that the Albanians have taken directly the ancient form *Scupi*, as Petar Skok points out (*Glasnik Skopskog naucnog drustva XV-XVI (1935-1936)*, 301). Another form with Albanian *sh* from *s* has been retained in nearby Paeonia in the toponym *Shtip*, the relationship of which with the ancient name *Astibos* is explained with the normal loss of the initial *a* in Albanian (consider the Albanian *mik* from the Latin *amicus*), and with the change of the final *b* into *p*. The most southerly point of the early places inhabited by Albanians, which it has been possible to verify hitherto, is Ohri, where likewise, the relationship between the ancient name *Lychnis*, *Lychnidos* and the Slavonic form *Ohrid* can be explained once again only through the mediation of the Albanian.

According to the above presentation, the Balkan homeland of the Albanian people must have been *Dardania - Paeonia*, provinces which, judging from the known names of persons, were Illyrian and not Thracian in Antiquity (compare P. Kretschmer, *Einleitung in die Geschichte der griechischen Sprache*). Therefore, the presence of the Thracian-Albanian element in this area leads to the supposition about the influx of the Thracian element into the ancient Illyrian province. No mention of these is made in the historical sources, but it is confirmed by the results of Mateescu who, in his detailed analysis of epigraphic material, has noted the Thracian infiltration into these Illyrian provinces during their vigorous expansion, which occurred at a relatively late period, in the 2nd to 3rd centuries. A.D (*Granita de apur a Tracilor* in "Annuarul Institutului de Istoria nationale", Cluj (1923), III, 377-492).



Therefore, it can be said that Dardania and Paeonia were the provinces in which the early Albanian-Illyrian symbiosis took place in the interior of the Balkan Peninsula.

#### NOTE

\* Taken from *Hymje ne historine e gjuhes shqipe* ( Introduction to the History of the Albanian Language ), Prishtina 1955, pp. 47 - 50.



## CHAPTER 2

# THE ALBANIANS IN KOSOVA IN THE 12TH - 18TH CENTURIES

Prof. SELAMI PULAHA

## ON THE PRESENCE OF ALBANIANS IN KOSOVA DURING THE 14th-17th CENTURIES

The question of the presence of Albanians in Kosova during the Middle Ages and after, and whether or not they are indigenous there, has occupied an important place in historiography. In particular, it has become the object of studies in the nationalist-romantic Yugoslav historiography of the 19th and 20th centuries, which suggests that, in the Middle Ages, Kosova was allegedly the centre of the Serbian state and inhabited by the Serbs until the late 17th and early 18th centuries, when, after the Austro-Ottoman War of 1683-1699, part of the Serbian population which had taken the Austrian side withdrew to the north and was allegedly replaced by Albanians from the internal mountainous regions of Northern Albania. With these theses, the Great-Serb bourgeoisie has tried to create the belief in the public opinion in the country as well as in international opinion that its policy to occupy territories inhabited by the Albanians had its own historical reasons. The present-day Yugoslav historiography, especially that of Serbia, basing itself on virtually the same argument, takes more or less the same position. To this day, Great-Serb chauvinists use their denial of the presence and autochthony of Albanians as an "historical argument" to deprive the Albanians of Kosova of national democratic rights and to justify their policy of oppression and persecution against them.

Even those recent Yugoslav writers like Dinic and Handzic, (1) who by publishing documents of Ragusa and the Ottoman Empire have provided new factual information about the Albanians in Kosova in the 15th century, remain loyal to the old thesis; contrary to the truth, they, too, accepted the existence of Albanians in these parts only as a minority compared to the Serbian population. The question is presented in this way also in recent articles by Cirkovic. (2)

To prove this view, the Yugoslav scholars rely mainly on the acts of the Serbian State and Church related to Kosova for the period before the Ottoman occupation (1455) and on onomastic evidence. These documents of the 13th-15th centuries, belong primarily to the Serbian feudal class; they broadly reflect the views of that class on the questions of the State and Church order, and the Serbian political history. Consequently, they throw little light on the work of Albanian feudal lords, or the situation of the masses of the Albanian people. These sources do not give data about all the villages of the region, but are restricted to those which were the property of religious institutions. The fact that they describe only the Albanians of the Catholic faith as *Arbanas* and make no distinction between the Albanian and the Serbian Orthodox population makes them even less useful. The Orthodox Albanian in that region, who was part of the same religious and political community as the Serbs, has usually been



considered by the scribes of mediaeval chancelleries as a "Serb".

The Ottoman sources contain a greater wealth of all-sided documentation, which covers a wider period and territory and is not limited to some monasterial villages alone. This material, gathered by the Ottoman rulers through their direct contact with the peasant masses, deals with the social-political and economic changes and the conversion to Islam; it explains why the Albanian population in Kosova emerges more clearly as the predominant group in the documents of the 15th and 17th centuries. This evidenced indicates that Serbian scholars have interpreted history arbitrarily to prove that the increase resulted from the emigration of people from the highlands of Northern Albania.

The whole of Albanian historiography and many foreign scholars have provided facts and convincing arguments in support of Albanians in Kosova as the predominant population throughout the Middle Ages before the year 1690, when, it is claimed, the Serbs left and were replaced by the Albanians who were brought in by the Ottomans or descended from the mountains as invaders !

\*

\*       \*

The Slav occupation of the north and northeastern Albanian lands began in the 11th century, when the Albanian culture and language had already been formed. In the Albanian territories as a whole, the archaeological evidence for the existence of a Slavonic culture following the migrations of Slavs in the 6th and 7th centuries is very limited and isolated and restricted in time. It does not comprise a culture which stood on its own alongside the early mediaeval Arbereshi. The materials about the Slav culture belong to later periods and are connected with the Bulgarian and Serbian invasions from the 9th to 12th centuries. (3) The Slavonic language began to influence Albanian when the formation of the grammatical structure of the Albanian had been completed and when the phonetic changes, giving Albanian appearance to words borrowed from Latin, had been carried out. The borrowings from Slavonic had been subject to unifying action of an independent language. (4) So, the Slavonic-Albanian linguistic relations did not develop in the first centuries of Slav migrations, but in the 11th to 14th centuries after the occupation of Albanian territories by the Serbian State. At this time, too, the Slavonic toponyms appeared in Kosova.

From the 11th to the 15th centuries, with very few interruptions, the northern and northeastern Albanian territories remained under the rule of Serbian feudal lords of Dioclea (Zeta) and Rasa, coexisting politically with the Slavonic section in the same framework. During the 13th century, the Serbian Kingdom steadily extended its borders, until after Stefan Dusan (1333-1355), it included the larger portion of the Balkan Peninsula and the bulk of the Albanian territories. After the collapse of this state in the second half of the 14th century, the Albanian feudal principalities emerged in the northern provinces (the principalities of the Balshaj, Spanaj, Dushman and Dukagjin), while most of Kosova stayed under the rule of the Serbian Brankovices until it was occupied by the Ottomans in 1455. (5)

From the 11th to 15th centuries, when the Albanian nationality had already taken shape, Kosova, the Dukagjin Plateau and Western Macedonia, the former dwelling places of the Dardans, the Paeones, the Penesti and the Lynkesti, were not included in the territories with the name Arberia - Albania, Albanum. (6) At first they retained the traditional historical names of the provinces of Macedonia and Epirus which had nothing at all to do with their ethnic



character; later they took the names of their occupiers like the Byzantine Empire and the Serbian State. It did not mean that Albanians did not live in those parts. This is explained with the fact that they remained continuously under Byzantine, Serbian or Bulgarian rule, sharing the same political-religious community (except the Catholic section) with the occupiers, without succeeding in forming their own state. As a result of this, Albanian territories appear in the sources not under their ethnic names, but under names which displayed the political-religious and not the linguistic or ethnic-cultural community of the time. The foreign occupations and religious divisions prevented the Albanians from identifying themselves earlier under their common ethnic name in all their territories.

Because of the invasions and foreign rule, the areas in which the Albanians lived in the Middle Ages had been reduced in size. The long, continuous and powerful pressure of Slavonic states and Church, accompanied by the colonization of Albanian territories by the Slavs, led to a steady shrinking of the area of Kosova where the Albanian language was spoken. This view has been accepted by various foreign authorities. After documenting the identity of compact groupings of Albanians in the vicinity of Ragusa and Kotorr in the 13th century and describing them as native Illyrian remnants, (7) the well known Croat historian, Sufflay, points to the wide distribution of Albanians in Zeta and Montenegro; then he remarks that the settlement of Slavs had fallen upon the Albanian people like a sword that, in the north and the south, had cut several branches from the trunk and confined them to a smaller area. (8)

Despite the paucity of these data, the historical sources of the Southern Slavs, the most significant for the history of Kosova for the period before Ottoman occupation, testify to the continuous existence of the Albanian population in this territory at different periods of Serbian rule. This is proved, first of all, by such Serbian documents as the code of Stefan Dusan (9) (which mentions the Albanians - the *Arbanas* inhabitants of these territories) and the chrysobulls of Serbian rulers for churches and monasteries. The chrysobulls of Deçan (1330) and the monastery of St. Michael and Gabriel (1348-1353) in Prizren refer to the Albanians on the Dukagjin Plateau near Prizren and in the villages of Drenica. The latter attests to the existence of nine villages of Albanian herdsmen in the vicinity of Prizren, known by the names Gjinovci (Gjinaj), Magjerci, Bjeloglavci, Flokovci (Flokaj), Crnca, Caparci (Çaparaj), Gjonovci (Gjonaj), Spinadinci (Shpinaj), and Novaci. (10)

According to these sources, Albanians frequented the bazaar of the monastery of St. George near Shkup (11), they worked as shepherds, farmers and soldiers in the district of Tetova (12), and as farmers in the villages of the great feudal estate of Deçan. (13)

The Ragusian sources testify to the residence of a sizable number of Albanians from the 14th and early 15th centuries in the town of Novobrda. About 150 Albanian heads of households, residents with their families, were craftsmen, specialists and workers in the mines of the city, according to the register of debtors kept by the Dubrovnik merchant, Mihail Lukarevic, who lived there during the 1530s. (14) In these documents the Albanians can be identified by their traditional names like Gjon, Gjin, Lul, Llesh, Bardh, Progon, Prenk, Lale, Dede, Lum and Muzak.

The Albanians in these territories came from all social strata and classes as farmers, herdsmen, merchants, landlords and citizens; they were not just nomad herdsmen, as the Yugoslav scholars try to say. Their wide geographical distribution not only within the province of Kosova but also beyond its borders, in the other regions with a Serbian population, constitutes clear proof of their being a sedentary population indigenous to these territories.



The documents after the Ottoman occupation of Kosova in 1455 give more information about this region being inhabited by an Albanian population. The land registers and the census records, compiled by the newly established Ottoman occupiers in the 15th and 16th centuries, among other things, give the toponymy of inhabited places as well as the anthroponymy of a large part of the population.

The records help to explode once and for all the "myth" about the ancient and permanently Serbian character of the population of Kosova and the thesis that the Albanians migrated to Kosova under the Ottoman rule to "deserbize" it, especially after the alleged massive exodus of Serbs following the uprisings of 1690 and 1738.(15) This hypothesis, which is refuted by other arguments, too, has no basis in reality, because the register of the 1455 census of Kosova, published by the Oriental Institute of Sarajevo, (16) shows clearly that, before the process of mass conversion to Islam had begun, the Albanians lived in large numbers as peasants in the eastern parts of the Plain of Kosova, (17) just as we shall find them according to the figures of a register of the sandjak of Kystendil, in equally large numbers in eastern Macedonia, in Kratova. (18)

The data of the Ottoman land registers of the 15th and 16th centuries indicate clearly that the overwhelming majority of the population of the Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova were Albanians of the Catholic and Orthodox faith. The Serbian ethnic elements there were only a minority, made up of feudal lords, clergymen, civil servants, merchants and others, who had come there especially during the reign of Stefan Dusan, when migrations of the Slav population from north to south took place, a phenomenon Yugoslav scholars in general have accepted. The Wlach element comprised an insignificant minority there. The most important fact is that most of the inhabitants registered in those regions, and in the Dukagjin Plateau especially, during the 15th century bore Albanian names, but, from the second half of the 16th century, when some of them were compelled to adopt the Islam, took Islamic names. There is not the slightest doubt that, under the historical conditions when the Albanian population had been obliged to live for centuries in political and social subjection under Serbian rule and still retained its own language, customs and habits, the Albanian anthroponymy, which was subsequently partly replaced with Islamic anthroponymy, could not have been maintained except by Albanians. Even in the instances when Albanian names are accompanied with a Slavonic surname or vice-versa, we still have an Albanian population. Under the political and religious pressure of the Serbian State and Church, the original Albanians were forced to take Slavonic names, but, once they were free of it, they immediately went back to the Albanian names of their grandparents and great-grandparents, because the sense of nationality had not died out among them.

Apart from this, a large part of the Albanian population, especially in the sandjak of Vuçitern and in the nahije of Peja, was of the Orthodox faith; because of the political and religious factors under Serbian rule, they bore an anthroponymy which had lost its distinctive Albanian ethnic character and belonged more to Serbian and Byzantine Orthodox religious anthroponymy. Another proof of this population is that, along with the Catholic clergy, there were the Orthodox clergy who bore Albanian names;(19) in documents, the Orthodox population of many villages, in quarters of some towns, such as Kerçova and Janjeva, is described as Albanian-*Arbanas* (20).

Nine villages of Albanian herdsmen in the vicinity of Prizren were Orthodox, too.(21) From the anthroponomic stand-point, during the 15th and 16th centuries, most of their inhabitants bore Slavonic names, while the names of the villages were Albanian and the Serbian documents describe them explicitly as Albanian.

The land registers in the village of the *nahije* of Vuçitern and Prishtina record Albanians with Slavonic names who are identified as such by the addition *arba nas* or by the Albanian names of their parents. Such for example are : Todori, son of Arbanas, Branslav, son of



Arbanas (Kucica village), Radovan, son of Gjon (Cikatovo village).(22)

The disguising of Albanians with Slavonic or Byzantine names can be seen also in many villages. Although as toponyms the villages bear Albanian names of the chiefs of clans in the plural form like Gjinovc (Gjinajt), the Leshovc (Leshajt) and Tanushovc (Tanushajt), with names such as Arbanas, Arbanashka, Petriha, Arbanashka-Brenica and appear to be Albanian, they have inhabitants of the Orthodox religion, the majority of them with Slavonic names. (23) For example, the inhabitants of Arbanas village had the following names: Stojan, Dajin, Dano Stojani, Mati Marko, Andrija Marko, Dimsha Marko, Luka Gjurko, Nikolla Luka, Pjetri Dimja, Stojan Pjetri, Gjura Marko, Lazar Step, Gjura Pejash.(24)

The numerous examples from the registers of Orthodox Albanians bearing Slavonic names lead to the conclusion that this anthroponymy cannot serve as a criterion to determine absolutely that this population was Slav, because the Albanians of the Orthodox faith are disguised behind Slavonic names. Hence, people's names cannot be equated with their ethnic character in these zones, in the way many foreign writers, (25) especially the Serbs, have done; by doing so, then the historical conditions, in which the Albanian population was obliged to live, (26) would not be taken into account. This becomes even more clear if we remember that, during the reign of Stefan Dusan, in Kosova in the first half of the 14th century, the Albanian Catholic and the Orthodox Christians of the Byzantine rite were forcibly converted to the Serbian rite. Under the code of Dusan, any religion other than the Orthodox of the Serbian rite was prohibited in this territory and the general conversion to this religion was ordered. Any objection was punished with severe measures, such as sequestration of property, banishment, branding and even death. (27) The result of this religious imposition and discrimination under Serbian political domination was the disguising of the Albanian population with Slavonic names along with the former Albanian and Byzantine anthroponyms.

The principle followed by many scholars (28) that any village with a Slavonic name must be inhabited by Slavs cannot serve as a criterion for deciding the ethnic character of a population. Proof of this is the fact that the inhabitants of a large number of villages with Slavonic names had an Albanian population, the overwhelming majority of which bore Albanian names, as in the case of 16th villages in Altun-ili and 14 villages in Peja.

The Slavonic toponymy implanted in these territories during the Early Middle Ages reflects the historical contacts between Albanians and Slavs long before the 15th century. But this does not enable one to judge what population these places had in the 15th century. In a series of instances, it is linked with foreign military administration and state apparatus and is not backed by any ethnic reality. The administrative-political factors are the main reason for Slavonic toponyms in these territories inhabited by Albanians, and this can be found in other parts of the Balkans inhabited by other non-Slav populations.

Matters are quite different in the case of the Albanian toponyms. Albanian place names can be used reliably to prove that Albanians lived in such places; these names show in themselves that, despite Serbian domination for several centuries the long-established population had withstood assimilation by the Slavs before the 15th century. The Mediaeval onomastics of the 14th-15th centuries in Montenegro, Hercegovina and Kosova reveal a series of Albanian toponyms which cannot be explained except by acknowledging that Albanian ethnic masses resided there. Scholars are continually increasing the list of these toponyms even in territories partly Slav today. (29)

In general, Albanian names in the Middle Ages, especially in the outlying regions which stayed under foreign domination for centuries, lost their ethnic character to a considerable extent. Under the constantly changing social-political and religious conditions since the ancient period, the Albanian territories were under the Roman Empire and, subsequently, under the Byzantine Empire, the Bulgarian and Serbian states, and the Ottoman Empire. As a consequence of the domination of the universal religions and cultures of these states, Latin, Slavonic, oriental and



other strata can be seen in the Albanians' onomastics. The Albanian case cannot be analysed going by the example of many European countries, where the names have preserved their distinct ethnic quality, therefore conclusions cannot be drawn from onomastics without taking into account specific historical conditions.

\*

\*

\*

Because of the series of measures taken by the Ottoman rulers in the 16th century, a number of Albanians on the Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova had to abandon the Orthodox faith and embrace Islam. The inhabitants gave up Slavonic names and took up Islamic ones. The conversion to Islam took place, first, in urban areas and, later, in the countryside. Thus, in the 16th century, we find the greater part of the residents of Peja, Prizren, Vuçiterna, and Prishtina, as well as those of the villages of Dukagjin Plateau converted to Islam. This conversion had proceeded more slowly in the villages of the Sandjak of Vuçiterna, but it took place more rapidly there in the 17th century.

In Kosova, the Islamic religion spread among the Albanian Orthodox and Catholic population, but not among the Slav minority which lived under the same historical circumstances. This is understandable. The influence and authority of the patriarchate of Peja, which was greater among the Slav Orthodox minority than among the Albanian population, did not allow the penetration of Islam among the Slavs. The Albanians, on the other hand, lacked religious unity and a common Church. In their eyes, the patriarchate of Peja served the Serbian feudal class, that is, a foreign domination; therefore its authority among them was weak. Besides this, other social and political factors operated here. For example, the Ottoman Empire oppressed Albanian economically and politically and worked out its policy of conversion to defeat their liberation struggle.

However, neither Orthodoxy under Serbian rule nor conversion to Islam during the Ottoman rule proved effective as ideological weapons in the hands of foreign occupiers for the Slavization of the Albanians or for their political-cultural assimilation by the Ottomans. They failed because a large Albanian group was an inseparable component of the Albanian nationality which had been formed many centuries earlier. Their ethnic and cultural heritage and unity enabled Albanians to resist the disruptive role of religion, although it left its mark on their culture. In this context, the existence of Serbian state and religious institutions, the churches the Serbian rulers built and endowed with property, the monasteries and royal palaces, cannot be used as absolute arguments, in the way Serbian historiography commonly does, (30) to prove that these territories were Serbian from the ethnic stand-point. Similarly, building of mosques and Moslem religious institutions in the centuries of Ottoman rule cannot prove that here we had a Turkish population. The institutions of these religions were connected with the socio-political and ideological changes during the Serbian or Ottoman occupations, and not with the ethnic character of these territories.

Kosova cannot be considered a cradle of the rise of the Mediaeval Serbian state, as Yugoslav historians claim, because this state did not emerge there and did not operate there during most of its existence; it flourished in other territories with a Serbian population such as Rasa and Dioclea. As was usual in the Middle Ages, the centre of this state moved from one territory to the other, from Serbia to Macedonia, from Macedonia to Thessaly. It made Kosova its centre only for a period, especially in the first half of the 14th century. At this time,



Serbians built most of their churches and, monasteries, especially in Deçan, St. Michael and Gabriel, Graçanica, and Banjska, to intensify Serbian colonization and to convert the Albanian population to Serbian Orthodoxy to facilitate its ethno-cultural assimilation. After the death of Stefan Dusan, the Serbian state had several centres, and Pomoravlje in the state of Knjaz Lazar became the more important one. The withdrawal of the centre to the north was done for political, economic and ethnic reasons, it was shifted to solely Serbian ethnic territories, moving away from the places inhabited largely by an Albanian and other non-Serbian populations which had been included in this state in the past. The centre could not stay long on ethnically alien territories.

The province of Kosova, where the political and religious centre of the Serbian state was established for a time, and where an ethnic factor separated the ruling class, the Serbian state, church and military apparatus, from the native Albanian population, is not the only and first instance of its kind in the history of Europe. To accept this superstructure imported in given historical periods as an indigenous Serbian creation, as Serbian scholars frequently do, means, for example, to consider all the Baltic and Polish "Ostland" German, because the "Teutonic Order" ruled there for several centuries, or to consider Slovenia and almost all the territories of Croatia and Slavonia, where the ruling class, the church and the urban bourgeoisie was German, as Austro-German territory. (31)

\*

\*

\*

In their reports, Pjeter Mazreku, Gjergj Bardhi and other papal delegates, who visited these territories early in the 17th century, provide evidence of the settlements of Albanians in Kosova. Of several towns they said explicitly that the Moslem population, which dominated in them, was of Albanian nationality. One of them, Pjeter Mazreku, in his report of 1623-1624 writes: "Prizren has 12.000 Turkish (i.e. Moslem) souls, almost all of them Albanians... and, likewise, of this nation about 200 souls may be Catholics ... About 600 Serbian souls live there." (32) The Turkish geographer, Hadzi Kalfa, says that Prizren was inhabited entirely by the Albanians. (33) Evlija Celebi, a 17th-century, Turkish traveller, speaking about the town of Vuçiterna he visited, said that its residents did not speak Slavonic (Bosnian), but Albanian while Turkish was used in the administration. According to him, Albanian was spoken in Kosova and Macedonia (Shkup). (34)

Gjergj Bardhi, archbishop of Tivar, on the occasion of his visit to Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau in 1638, writes about Gjakova and Prizren : "All these places just mentioned are Albanian and speak that language." (35)

The 17th-century reporters in many cases say that when they use the term "Turk" they mean the Albanians converted to Islam, thus giving it a religious content without regard for the nationality. Conversion to Islam did not bring about the cultural-ethnic assimilation of this population. It was Albanian and remained Albanian in the subsequent centuries, irrespective of the change of religion, just what occurred in Bosnia, where the population converted to Islam, but without losing its Slavonic ethnic character.

That the majority of the urban population was Albanian is proven from the land registers of the second half of the 16th century. According to them, the towns had the following number



of households: Prizren 557, Prishtina 506, Trepça 447, Novobrda 366, Vuçiterna 286, Janjeva 288, Peja 158, Gjakova 46. The process of conversion to Islam had advanced very rapidly. In Peja, it had included 90 per cent of population, in Vuçiterna 80 per cent, in Prishtina 60 per cent, in Prizren 56 per cent, in Novobrda 37 per cent, in Trepça 21 per cent, and in Janjeva 14 per cent. There is not the slightest doubt that the Moslem population, which comprised the majority, was Albanian. This is clearly evident not only from the testimony of compilers of reports which describe the Moslem population as Albanian, but also from the fact that, in many cases, the inhabitants converted to Islam still retained as surnames the Christian names of their parents, or characteristically Albanian surnames such as Gjoci, Bardhi, Gjini, Deda, Reçi, Koka. On the other hand, the Turkish ethnic population is distinguished from the Albanian Moslems in the registers by such ethnic labels as Turk Bali, Turk Ahmeti. Besides these, there were also other Albanian residents in the cities, Catholic or Orthodox, who are identifiable by their purely Albanian names such as the residents of the "Arbanas" quarter in Janjeva or the "Madhiq" quarter in Prizren.

Taken together, Peja, Gjakova, Prizren, Vuçiterna and Prishtina had a majority of Islamic families, a total of 1 006, and 547 Christian families; 217 heads of households bore Albanian or Albanian-Slavonic names, and only 330 heads of families had names of the Slavonic and Byzantine Orthodox type, including the Orthodox Albanians mentioned above. This shows clearly that in these towns the population was almost entirely Albanian. The same situation existed in towns like Trepça, Janjeva and Novobrda. In these, however, the Slavs must have been more numerous than in Prishtina and Prizren, and this is understandable. The Slav colonization in these towns, mainly persons of the administrative apparatus and the church and merchants, had been, more powerful, because, as major mining centres of the Mediaeval period, they represented a special interest for the Serbian State.

The evidence of Albanians in Kosova can be found also in documents about the beginning of writing and teaching the Albanian language.

Most of the writers of early Albanian literature of the 16th and 17th centuries worked in the districts of Kosova and strove, among other things, to disseminate Albanian education and schools.

Writer Pal Hasi, who lived and worked in the late 16th and early 17th century, was, as is apparent from his name, from the northeastern region between Prizren and Kukes. The other writer, Pjeter Budi, started his work for the cultivation of Albanian language at the beginning of the 17th century in Kosova, where he served for many years. In a letter written in Albanian, he complains about the poverty and ignorance of the people and expresses his regret that there were no Albanian schools. (36) Likewise, Pjeter Bogdani, Andrea Bogdani and Luke Bogdani, who continued the tradition of writing Albanian after Buzuku and Budi, were also from the Dukagjin Plateau.

Pjeter Bogdani, who lived and worked in the second half of the 17th century, frequently discussed the need for the schooling of Albanian boys in the reports he sent to the Vatican about the situation of Albanians in the region of Kosova.

The work for the cultivation of the Albanian and for schools in the Albanian language began early in Kosova. As far as it is documented, it began at a least at the end of the 16th century and had Prizren and Gjakova as its centres, but it also extended further east to Janjeva, Gilan, and the vicinity of Shkup.

\*

\*

\*

The Ottoman occupation did not alter the ethno-cultural structure of the Albanian



nationality in the Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova, although it brought changes in the political, economic, social and ideological planes. With the consolidation of the Ottoman administration in the 15th century, the state apparatus, which had been in the hands of the Serbian feudal class, and the predominant position of the Serbian Orthodox Church were totally destroyed. Having lost some of its members during the military conflicts with the Ottoman state, the feudal class, mostly Serbs, immediately after the occupation in 1455, was dispossessed of the land through state ownership and was eliminated as an independent economic and political force.

From the stand-point of its ethnic structure, the Ottoman feudal class, at the beginning of the occupation of this region, consisted of Muslim spahis who were mainly Turks of Turkish nationality or Islamized feudal lords from other Balkan regions, long since integrated into that class.

At first, there were few Albanians within the feudal class, but, by the beginning of the 16th century, they gradually occupied main positions. This is especially obvious from the documents of endowments (vakef), which show that, by the end of the 16th century, the majority of the local feudal aristocracy was made up of people of Albanian nationality. (37) The Ottoman feudal class did not have any Serbian ethnic element. The former Serbian feudal class was located on an alien ethnic element. The former Serbian feudal class was located on an alien ethnic territory; with the change in conditions, the Ottoman feudal class acquired more people from the ranks of the local population. The same happened in other Albanian territories, which confirms that the broad popular masses were Albanian.

The Albanian feudal class in the northeastern territories had greater possibilities to emerge on the scene now than under Serbian rule, when the Serbian central administrative and church apparatus were established there. The most prominent members of the Serbian feudal hierarchy hindered the growth of the Albanian feudal class here more than in the other territories, which remained for a shorter period as peripheral zones within the Serbian state.

Because of the resistance of the popular masses and the need to create social support in the country, the new Ottoman occupiers began to admit native feudal lords in the ranks of the local ruling class and shared power with them as they usually did in other places. The economic and political strengthening of the Albanian element became easier also, because here the Ottoman central state power did not operate directly with its full weight; no ethnic Turks came in as colonists, who could have been integrated into the feudal class, as occurred in other parts of the Eastern Balkans. Thus, little by little, was eliminated the greater part of the ethnic difference between the ruling class, which was mainly foreign, and the native population, made up of the stratum of the Albanian common people, a difference which existed most emphatically under the Serbian rule.

The collapse of the old Serbian economic, political and religious apparatus and the conversion to Islam, first of feudal lords, and then, for political, fiscal and social reasons, of the urban and the rural population, changed those conditions which had previously favoured the Slavization of Albanians. The common religion and the cultural relations resulting from it and the territorial coexistence between the Albanian and the Serbian population the intensity with which it had operated before the Ottoman occupation for the cultural-ethnic assimilation of Albania. Thus, the conversion to Islam reversed the process of Slavization and further alienated the Albanians from the Slavs, although it created the favourable conditions which could lead to the Ottoman cultural and political assimilation of the Albanians. The historical circumstances of the following centuries, the major armed social conflicts of the Albanians with the Ottomans, and the emergence of a mainly Albanian ruling class did not permit these processes to advance towards the denationalization of the Albanians.



Both in the past and at present, the Yugoslav scholars have emphasized the thesis that Kosova ceased to be Serbian and was filled with Albanian emigrants from the mountainous regions of Northern Albania, especially after the displacement of Serbs to the Serbian territories of the north; this allegedly occurred during the Austro-Turkish War and the withdrawal of the Austrian armies in 1690.(38)

The Albanians in Kosova are autochthonous and not a population which came as occupiers in a territory vacated in 1690, which is put as time-limit for the so-called displacement of Serbs. This shows clearly that the Albanians were not appearing on these territories for the first time. The historical sources make no reference to movements of the Albanian population from the mountainous hinterland of Northern Albania - movements which would cause profound ethnic changes - or to the depopulation of Kosova. The cadastral registrations, in particular, show that there was no demographic possibility of such shifts from the 15th to 17th centuries. To make this clearer, let us dwell briefly on the demographic situation of the Albanian territory.

The demographic development of the Albanians had more or less the same features as that of the other Balkan peoples, not only because they had the same level of growth, but also because, with the form of feudal organization which it created everywhere, the Ottoman rule brought about similar economic, social and political conditions for all. The Ottoman occupation brought many changes. The fierce fighting, which lasted for a century, destroyed many inhabited places, depopulated mainly the coastal zones from Vlora to Shkodra, and forced the emigration to Italy or Dalmatia of a considerable part of the population, estimated to at about 200 000 people. It was more than a hundred years, the end of the 16th century, before life became normal. The losses in people and the new political and economic conditions the Ottoman rule imposed hindered the revival of the Albanian regions, but they could not stop it. By that time, the number of towns and villages in the present territories of the PSR of Albania and Kosova (39) had reached 5 315, that of households 173 421, compared with 3 608 inhabited places with 82 810 households in the 15th century.

The demographic situation of the Albanian districts was not the same everywhere. At the end of the 16th century, the regions of agricultural-livestock farming economies in Southern or Southeastern Albania, the Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova Plain, the lowlands of Shkodra, and the regions of Central Albania, were more densely populated.

The mountainous regions of Northern Albania with a livestock-agricultural economy continued to be sparsely populated despite an increase in the 16th century. At the end of the 16th century, these regions had less than 3 per cent of the total households in the Albanian territory. It is understandable that, because of unsuitable economic conditions in a rugged mountainous territory and shortage of arable land, they could not have a greater increase and concentration of people than those with an agricultural-pastoral economy. Because of their very small numbers, they could not serve as a main source of increase of the population as a whole before and after the Ottoman occupation, or as assembly zones from which the Albanians as herdsmen could pour out to populate their territories. The population of the mountainous regions of Northern Albania, with 3 201 households in 156 villages at the end of the 16th century, could not fill the Dukagjin Plateau and the Kosova Plain where, at that time, there were 35 844 households in 1 758 settlements. Neither could have this occurred in the 16th century or later, even if the whole population had shifted.

This small human potential in the mountainous regions of the North implies that no possibilities at all existed for large inter-regional movements, let alone for "demographic explosions" outside the Albanian zones. The migration from the mountainous regions with an agricultural-pastoral economy to the plains in the western or eastern zones, which took place in the 16th and 17th centuries, mainly for economic reasons, affected a small number of people who occupied an insignificant place in the total. Failing to take into account the whole



Albanian population and this ratio in its distribution, considering only fragmentary data about some movements, and relying on erroneous methods of giving priority to biological and geographic factors in social development, a number of scholars have exaggerated the demographic factor and, consequently, the socio-economic role of the remote mountainous regions in the process of the formation and consolidation of the Albanian people during the Middle Ages. To emigrations of their inhabitants they have attributed in a simplistic and mechanical way the role which the socio-economic and political-cultural aspects have played in the development of Albanian people on their own territories. (40)

The emigrations from the internal parts of Northern Albania to Kosova, which, according to historical and ethnographic data, took place during the 18th and 19th centuries, were movements within the same ethnic trunk, just as they occurred in other parts of Central or Southern Albania. In Yugoslav literature, the dimensions of these emigrations have been exaggerated. They have been studied not on the basis of historically documented facts, but more on that of 20th-century ethnographic data, which do not permit one to make completely accurate judgements about the phenomena of two or three centuries earlier. (41)

The historical sources of the 15th and 16th centuries, while testifying that the overwhelming majority of population in these territories was Albanian, give the sound argument which proves that this group had lived there under the Serbian rule as a direct continuation of the Illyrian population.

By proving also that the Islamized population there had been Albanian in the 15th century and in the first part of the 16th century, these sources demolish the thesis, widespread in the works of many foreign scholars, especially Serbian, that in these Albanian territories there was a "process of Islamization" of Slav elements which led to their "Albanization". (42)

Islamization could not have served as a means of the so-called Albanization of Slavs because, for the Albanians themselves under Ottoman bondage, the imposing of Islamic religion was a negative factor which operated for their cultural-ethnic assimilation and inhibited their social-political and cultural evolution. It is beyond all reality to imagine that an oppressed people in an occupied country could impose the ideology of the oppressor and the occupier on another people languishing under the same yoke and, through this means, assimilate it from the ethnic viewpoint. The authors of this thesis are mistaken when they identify the position of the Albanian people, who continued to put up stern armed resistance to the Ottoman occupation during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, with that of the Albanian feudal class, which was a component part of the Ottoman ruling class; they pretend that the Albanian people had a privileged position under the Ottoman rule.

There can be no talk of the assimilation of the Slav element in these parts by the Albanians, because the suitable objective and subjective factors for such a process did not exist.

\*

\*

\*

The thesis that the Albanians came to Kosova after the Austro-Turkish War of 1683-1699, when the so-called great migration of Serbs from Kosova is supposed to have taken place, is refuted by the situation presented in the documents of the Command of the Austrian armies during the military actions carried out jointly with the Albanian insurgents against the Ottoman forces in the years 1689-1690.

These documents prove once again that Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau were inhabited by the Albanians before the time when it is claimed that a so-called migration of Serbs took



place. The more important of them are : *first*, the fact that the Command of the Austrian army included these regions within the borders of Albania and no longer used for them the name Serbia in the political-religious sense - a name used by many writers, especially clerical ones, of the 15th-17th centuries as a continuation of the tradition of including these territories for centuries on end within the borders of the Serbian state and in one diocese with other Slav areas of Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria. The Austrian documents state that "Prizren is the capital city of Albania", that "Peja and Prishtina are included in Albania", and that "the Albanian language is spoken in the regions of Kosova". The Emperor of Austria, Leopold I, personally stated that his armies were fighting in Albania (when they entered Kosova) (43). Pjeter Bogdani was described as "the archbishop of Albania" and the diocese of Shkup as a diocese in Albania. (44)

*Second*, the sources speak of a large number of local Albanian insurgents who joined the Austrian armies in 1689. Their numbers are so large that they could have emerged only if the province were inhabited by an Albanian population. At the time when the Austrian armies were entering Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, the uprising against the Ottoman rule, begun there sometime earlier, had reached its height. At the beginning of November 1689, when the Austrian forces entered Prishtina, they were welcomed by 5 000 Albanian insurgents, in Peja by 3 000 Albanian insurgents, and in Prizren by 6 000 other Albanian insurgents. (45) There the commander of the Austrian forces, General Piccolomini, held talks with the archbishop of Shkup, Pjeter Bogdani. The Austrian authorities recognised the Albanians and not the Serbs as the sole main political force operating in Kosova. For this reason, they signed a treaty with them for their joint war against the Ottomans.

The fact that here they had to deal with regions with an Albanian population and the importance of the Albanian uprising, a factor which occupied a prime place in the war plans of the European states against the Ottoman Empire, impelled the Austrian Emperor, Leopold I, to issue a call to the oppressed peoples of the Balkans and, first of all, to the Albanians, in April 6, 1690, to engage in war against the Ottomans; (46) he also intensified his effort to strengthen their contacts with the Albanian insurgents of Kosova. (47)

The presence of the Albanian population in these regions during the 15th and 16th centuries, documented in the Albania, Ottoman, Austrian and other sources, makes clear that the Albanians were natives and not immigrants after the end of the 17th century. It shows that the mass migration of the Serbs from Kosova, which took place after this war, has been deliberately exaggerated, presenting it in such large dimensions that the ethnic composition of an extensive territory could be changed all at once, to explain, in this way, "the de-Serbianizing" of the zone. In fact, it was a very small migration of insurgents from the Serbian minority, led by the patriarch of Peja. It was not only the Serbs who shifted but, together with them, there were Albanian insurgents, the last traces of whom we encounter today in Slavonia. Had this migration been so large, its traces would have been left in local Ottoman documents, and in those of the Vatican, which received reports from its prelates and special envoys about the situation in these regions in the 17th and 18th centuries. A large amount of documentary material from these archives has been published, and it makes no mention of any large movements of population in Kosova.

On the other hand, we should not deny the movement of masses of Serbs from the territories from Nis to Belgrade, which became the main arena of the Austro-Turkish War for 16th years (1683-1699). Evidence of this can be found in the documentation in connection with the Serbs settled in Hungary at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century, among whom Serbs from Belgrade, Semendra, and other Slav territories, as well as Nish, are commonly mentioned, but there is no mention of Albanian or Serbian emigrants from Kosova. (48)



## NOTES

- 1 M.Dinic, *Iz Dubrovackog arhiva, I - III* Belgrade 1957, 1963, 1967; *Iz istorije rudarstva u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji i Bosnji*, I-II, Belgrade 1955, 1962; A.Handzic, *Nekoliko vijesti o Arbanasima na Kosovu i Metohiji sredinom XV vijeka*. Symposium on Skanderbeg, Prishtina 1969, pp.201-211.
- 2 S.Cirkovic, *Les albanais à la lumière des sources historiques des slaves du sud*, in : "Illyria and Albania", Belgrade 1988, pp.351-355, 358-359; *Kosovo-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989, pp.21-32.
- 3 A.Buda, *About Some Questions of the History of the Formation of the Albanian People, Their Language and Culture*, "Historical Studies", no.1, 1980, p.172.
- 4 A.Buda, *op.cit.*
- 5 K.Jirecek-J.Radonic, *Istorija Srba*, Belgrade 1922, I, pp. 154-328; *The History of Albania*, vol.1. Tirana 1967, pp.175-176, 192, 204-207.
- 6 Beginning from the 11th century, the name Albania - Albanum was extending steadily and, in the 15th century, was extended to the limits of the Albanian principalities of the 14th and 15th centuries, impelled by the Albanian state political factor. It extended from Tivar and Pult in the north, to Cameria.
- 7 M.Sufflay, *Povijest sjevernih arbanasa*, p.61; *History of the Albanians of the North, The Serbs and the Albanians*, Prishtina 1968.
- 8 M.Sufflay, *Biologie des albanischen Volksstammes*, Ungarische Rundschau für historische und soziale Wissenschaften, V.Jahrgang, 1 heft, p.12.
- 9 *Zakonik Stefana Dusana*, Belgrade 1870, cl.180.
- 10 S.Novakovic, *Zakonski Spomenici*, Belgrade 1912, p.688; *Selo*, Belgrade 1943, p.278; M.Ternava, *The Albanians in the Feudal Estate of Deçan in the 30s of the 14th cent. According to the chrysobull of Deçan*. Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta u Pristini, XI, 1974, pp.255-271.
- 11 S.Novakovic, *op.cit.*, p.620.
- 12 *Ibidem*, p.660.
- 13 L.Thalloczy, K.Jirecek-M.Sufflay, *Acta et Diplomatares Albaniae Mediae Aetatis Illustrantia*, I. Wien, 1913, p.746, 798; M.Ternava, *The Albanians in the Feudal Estate of Deçan...*, pp. 255-271.
- 14 M.Dinic, *Iz istorije rudarstva* II, pp. 41, 81-82, 93-94.
- 15 S.Pollo, *Myths Compared With the Reality*, the newspaper *Drita*, June 28, 1981, pp.15-16
- 16 H.Hadzibegic, A.Handzic, E.Kovacevic, *Oblast Brankovica*, I, II, Sarajevo 1972.
- 17 The scholar from Sarajevo A.Handzic was the first to point this out. Although he made a contribution in this way, on the other hand, by sticking closely to the criterion in which he equates the character of the onomastics with the ethnic origin of its bearers, he arrives at the mistaken conclusion that the Serbs and not the Albanians constituted the majority of the population a Slav population. A.Handzic, *Nekoliko vijesti e Arbanasima na Kosovu i Metohiji ....*, pp. 201-209.
- 18 A.Stojanovski - I. Eren, *Kratovskata nahija vo XVI vek.*, Glasnik Nacionalnovo Instituta, Skopje, XV, 1971, no.1, pp.61-92.
- 19 S.Pulaha, *The Census of the Sandjak of Shkodra of 1485*, Tirana 1974, vol.1, p.40.
- 20 S.Pulaha, *The Albanian Population of Kosova in the 15th and 16th Century*, Tirana 1984, pp.96-97, 551-556.
- 21 S.Novakovic, *Zakonski spomenici*, p.688.



- 22 A.Handzic, *Nekoliko vijesti o arbanasima na Kosovu i Metohiji...*, pp.205-207.
- 23 Tapu ve kadastro umum mudurlugunun arsi, *Defteri mufasal livai Prizren*, no.55, pp.13-17; S.Pulaha, *The Towns of the Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova in the Second Half of the 16th cent. in the Light of New information of Ottoman Land Registers*, "Studime historike", no.4, 1980, p.201.
- 24 *Ibidem*, pp.202, 31-32.
- 25 This criterion has been followed generally by all the Yugoslav authors of the past and present. Bogdanovic takes this as an indisputable criterion. See *Knjige o Kosovu*, pp.56-58; likewise S. Cirkovic in *Kosovo-Past and Present*, p. 25.
- 26 To gain an idea of the grave situation in which the Albanian population lived under the Serbian rule, see: Brocardus, *Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum*, "Historiens des Croisades" (Historiens Armeniens), II, pp.484-485.
- 27 S.Novakovic, *Zakonik Stefana Dusana cara srpskogu 1349,-1354*, Belgrade 1898, pp. 153-155, 160 (Articles 6, 7, 8, 10, 21).
- 28 A.Selishev, *Slavjansko naselenie v Albanii*, Sofia, 1931; U.Zaimov, *Bolgarskie geograficheskie nazvanii v Albanii XV veka*, *Studia Balkanica I*, Sofia, 1970; G.Stadtmmuller, *Forschungen zur albanischen Fruhgeschichte*, pp.148-160; D.Bogdanovic, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, pp. 21, 37-38, *Kosovo-Past and Present*, p.25.
- 29 I.Ajeti, *Contribution to the Study of Mediaeval Onomastics in the Territory of Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Kosova*, "Studime Filologjike", 3, Tirana 1974, pp.15-27.
- 30 D.Bogdanovic, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, pp. 40-45.
- 31 S.Pollo, *Myths Compared With Reality*, "Drita", June 28, 1981, p.16.
- 32 I.Zamputti, *Reports*, vol.1, p.337 (Starine v. XXXIX, p.28).
- 33 S.Novakovic, *Hadzi Kalfa Catib-celebija, turski geograf 17 veka o Balkanskom poluostrvu*, *Spomenik XVIII*, Belgrade 1892, p.36.
- 34 Evlija Celebi, *Putopis-odlomci o jugoslovenskim zemljama* (preveo, uvod i komentar napisao Hazim Sabanovic), Sarajevo 1973, p.276; M.Ternava, *Albanians in the Cities of Kosova in the 15th-16th Centuries*, "Studime historike", no.2, 1979, pp.136-137.
- 35 I.Zamputti, *op.cit.*, vol. II, pp. 99-101, and 269.
- 36 J.Rexhepagiq, *Albanian Schools and the Activity of the Albanian Teacher Writers and Educational Workers in the 17th century*, "Perparimi", nos.6-7, year XV, Prishtina 1969, p.515; *The history of Albanian literature*, I, Tirana 1959, pp. 202-203.
- 37 Mention is made of powerful Albanian feudal lords such as Kukli Bey and his son Mehmet, Mehmet Beu - son of Hezer Kuka, Ahmet Bey, Dukagjin Zadeja, Sofi Sinan Pasha from Luma, Ajas Pasha and his brother, Vizier Koxha Sinan Pasha with his son, Kaçanikli Mehmet Pasha from the village of Topojan, Suzi Celebi from Prizren, Haxhi Bey - son of Theodor Muzaka, and others.
- 38 This question has been raised in a large number of past and present works of Yugoslav historiography, for instance, in those of J.Tomic, V.Georgevic, M.Filipovic, B.Nusic, J.Trifunovski, A.Urosevic, and others. It has been given in general form in *Istorije naroda Jugoslavije*, Belgrade 1960, p.89, 794, 796. More recently by D.Bogdanovic, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, pp. 101-104, and in *Kosovo-Past and Present*, pp. 42-43.
- 39 The sandjaks of Vlora, Delvina, Elbasan, Ohri, Dukagjin Shkodra, Prizren, Vuçiterna and Manastir (*kaza* of Korça and Bilisht).
- 40 G.Stadtmmuller, *Forschungen zur albanischen Fruhgeschichte*, Wiesbaden 1966, pp.29-30, 118-124, 172-173.
- 41 As typical examples of this reference we mention: A.Urosevic, *Kosovo*, Belgrade 1965, pp.78-80, 96-101; J.Trifunovski, *Kaçanicka klisura*, Belgrade 1950, p.492; M.Filipovic, *Has pod Pastrikom*, Sarajevo 1958, pp.40-51.



42 See, e.g., J. Tomitch, *Les albanais en vielle-Serbie et dans le Sandjak de Novi-Bazar*, Paris 1913, pp.21-58; M. Filipovic, *Has pod Pastrikom*, pp.26-28, 37; A. Urosevic, *Kosovo*, pp. 95-105, 327; D. Bogdanovic, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, pp. 92, 95-98; *Kosovo-Past and Present*, pp.95-98.

43 Wien, *Kriegsarchiv*, *Feldakten 1689*, Fasz. 167, 13, 1; (Annotationes und Reflexiones no.5), Bogen 4a, 20-20a, 32a,33,35-36a,62; H. Gerba, *Die Kaiserlichen in Albanien 1689*, in *Mitteilungen des KK*, *Kriegsarchiv*, Wien 1888, p. 136, 148, 240; M. Kostic, *Završni bilans polemike o srpsko-arbanaskom ustanku protiv turaka iz austrijski vojsku 1689/1690*, Belgrade 1962, pp.3-5, 8.

44 Wien, *Kriegsarchiv*, *Feldakten 1690*, 13,7; M. Kostic, *op.cit.*, p.7.

45 H. Gerba, *Die kaiserlichen in Albanien 1689*, p. 136, 148; *Silhdar Tarihi*, 2 zeile, pp. 425-430.

46 M. Kostic, *O postanku i znacenja tzv. Invitatorija Leopolda I balkanskim narodima od 6 aprila 1690*, *Istorijski casopis*, SAN II, Belgrade 1951, p.150.

47 M. Kostic, *Prilozi istoriji srpsko-arbanskog ustanka 1689-1690*, in *Arhiv za arbanasku starinu*, knjiga II, 1924, p.20.

48 See S. Gavrilovic-I. Jaksic, *Izvori o srbima u Ugarskoj s kraja XVII i pocetkom XVIII veka*, *Knjiga 3*, Belgrade 1987.



## ALBANIAN HERETICS IN THE SERBIAN MEDIAEVAL KINGDOM

The "Latin heresy" or the Catholic movement in the Serbian mediaeval Kingdom appears to be a religious problem. But, in fact, it is complicated with ethnic, cultural and political issues affecting the relations of the Serbian state with the Albanian population within its orbit. The movement became extremely exacerbated precisely when the Serbian Kingdom was reaching the height of its power in the late 13th and early 14th centuries. Historical reports throw light on the fierce conflicts between what were then called "Latins" and "schismatics", in the wide area from Kotor in the north to Durrës in the south, who represented the Catholic and the Orthodox communities.

The special policy to resolve the disputes between Catholicism and religious dissidence, in general, in the Serbian Kingdom, is linked with the names of the last kings of the Nemanja dynasty, Stefan Uroš II (1282-1321) and Stefan Dušan (1331-1355). Such a policy was recorded in the Code of Stefan Dušan (1349), which, amongst other things, reads :

"In regard to the Latin heresy..., if anyone does not heed the call to be converted and return to the true faith, he will be condemned to death as stipulated in the book of Holy Fathers. The King, as a true believer, must eradicate from his state any trace of heresy... The heretical clergy of an alien communion, who try to make proselytes, will be captured and sent to the mines or be expelled. The heretical churches will be re-consecrated and entrusted to clergy of the true faith... The protopopes of cathedral churches must convert the Latins in every town or village. Every Christian must be converted to the true faith as the apostles and the Holy Fathers say ... In case a Latin cleric is found trying to convert a Christian to the Latin faith, he will be punished with death... In case it is found that a half-believer has been married in secret to an Orthodox wife, he must be baptized according to the Orthodox rite; if he refuses to be baptized, his wife, children and home will be taken from him, he will be reduced to poverty and banished ... If a heretic is found who lives among Christians, he will be branded on the face and will be expelled; he who hides him will suffer the same punishment." (1)

The laws of the Code define clearly the status of those who are not identified with the Serbian-Orthodox mass and who were not considered "true subjects" of the Serbian Kingdom. The Code refers, first of all, to the "Latin heretics", i.e. the Roman Catholics, but in general, the same fate awaits those who are described as "half-believers" and the still numerous believers of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople. While classifying all these as "the evil which must be combated", the Serbian Church and State in the person of the sovereign, "the eliminator of the heresy", also listed the repressive measures ranging from the confiscation of their property, expulsion and physical mutilation to the death penalty. It is unnecessary to say that such penalties exceed the customary harshness of the epoch. They add brutality to the already grave atmosphere of religious persecution in the Serbian Kingdom of the 14th century.

From one stand-point, the Code simply institutionalized what was constant in the practice of the Serbian kings. In 1308, a French traveller visited Albania and the Balkans and wrote that the Serbian "schismatics" and their king "mercilessly persecute the Catholics, desecrate, ruin and occupy their churches, imprison their priests and commit other hideous evils..." (2)

In a detailed report for King Philip VI Valois (1332) (3), the French archbishop of Tivar, Guillaume Adam, described the situation of Catholics under the rule of Dušan in similar terms, with some additional details. Also from Tivar, in May 1350, the papal legate, Guido da Padova, reported that King Dušan compelled the Catholics to convert to Serbian Orthodoxy and to be rebaptized contrary to the canons of the Church (*contra formam ecclesie baptizari*). (4) This proves the practical application of one of the significant "anti-heretic" provisions of the Code of



Dusan, which was destined to have profound long-term consequences.

The problem may appear to be a simply religious one between the persecuted "heretics" and the persecuting "schismatics". However, the religious aspect alone cannot explain the ferocity of that brutal confrontation that concretized in the shape of real crusades and the destruction of whole towns considered to be nests of "heretics".(5) The terminology of the documents compiled in mediaeval chancellories cannot conceal the obvious (and proved) fact that this policy had an ethnic angle.

The geographical area of Catholicism in the Serbian Kingdom corresponds with the territories lying to the south and southwest of Rasa, that is, to the south of what Jirecek defines as "the Homeland of pure Serbs". (6) Testimony from the 13th and 14th centuries indicates that the Roman Catholic faith had spread to Montenegro (Dioclea, Zeta), Kosova and other territories of Albania and northern Macedonia. These regions, which at different times became part of the Serbian State, represented the belt "where the Catholic religion was professed and where the rite of the Roman church was retained (*ubi fides catholica colitur et ritus Romane ecclesie observatur*). (7) The sources mention the Catholic dioceses of Tivar, Shkodra, Ulqin, Drisht, Kotorr, Breskova, Rogozna, Pult, Gjakova, Prizren, Trepçe, Graçanica, Novoberda, and Shkup. (8) This is precisely where, with an intensity which diminishes towards the south, contacts took place between the native Albanian and new Slav populations. (9) The migration of Slavs, along with the expansion of the state of Rasa in this direction (12th-13th centuries) (10) modified the ethnic ratios only slightly. This was more marked on the northern borders of Kosova and Montenegro which, in 1346, are recorded as "lands inhabited by Christians with different languages." (11) However, the Albanians lived in sizeable numbers even beyond this limit. According to M. Sufflay, "the compact masses of Albanians in the vicinity of Ragusa and Kotorr in the 13th century show that everywhere there were autochthonous Illyrian remnants separated from the Albanian nucleus." (12)

In these territories of Albanian-Slav contacts, being Catholic almost always meant being Albanian. According to Pjeter Bogdani, a 17th-century author from Prizren, here "the Slavs, for *antonomasia*, call the Catholic religion the religion of Albanians (*Arbanaska vera*)." (13)

In the 13th and 14th centuries, the Catholic faith had its adherents also among smaller ethnic groups like Saxon and Ragusan colonists in Kosova or the Romanized inhabitants of coastal cities in Montenegro. Though an insignificant minority among the total number of Catholics, as S. Novakovic has rightly pointed out, they had a special status guaranteed by the Serbian state, which did not persecute them like the rest of Catholics. (14) Thus, the "anti-heretic" provisions of the Code of Dusan and the repressions resulting from them had to do with the Albanian Catholics. The church sources on this conflict normally speak about "Latins" and "schismatics" without using the ethnic label, but they do not fail to say this from time to time.

By attacking the members of an alien confession, the Serbian State was, at the same time, repressing the members of an alien ethnos. At this point, the religious dispute becomes identified with the ethnic tensions. The Serbian kings were very sensitive towards the latter. Among them, the idea of the state did not corresponded to that of a state in general, but to a Serbian State. (15) It had a national feature and was a state of Serbs. Here lies the root of that overthrow and elimination of the native feudal class in the territories occupied by Dusan and his predecessors and their replacement with representatives of the Serbian gentry and clergy. (16) In the case of Kosova, Northern Macedonia and Montenegro, however, the relations of the Serbian State with the subject Albanian population evolved somewhat differently, although the feudal class had been eliminated. (17) From the time they were included within the Serbian State, these regions had gained a special position. Besides becoming political and church centres of the Serbian State, after its abandonment of mountainous Rasa, they were, at the same time, a zone of very delicate contacts with the rival powers of the East (Byzantium) and the West (Rome).



In this context, the existence of a population which did not identify itself with the Serbian community or state, caused insecurity or "destabilization", according to a present-day Yugoslav mediaevalist with a strong sense of political reality. (18) That programme of "conversion" outlined in the Code of Dusan serves the conforming and "homogenization" (to use a current political term) of Albanians. The operation of religious conversion of Albanian "heretics" and their baptism with Slavonic names, as the Papal legate, Guido da Padova, noted in 1350, was growing furiously in these parts. (19) Its aim was to eliminate the cultural and religious barriers which separated and identified the Albanians. It was the first step towards their ethno-cultural assimilation.

The consequences of such a violent policy of assimilation are especially clear in the anthroponymic data in a number of acts of endowment by the Nemanja kings to the Serbian monasteries of Deçan, Gračanica and Archangel, in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro. Many Yugoslav writers, who have wanted to assume that the name of a person is equal with his ethnos, have utilized the anthroponymy of these acts, which is mostly Slavonic, to conclude that the population was mostly Slav. However, the fictitious ethnic ratios they constructed begin to collapse when those names are analyzed scientifically. The Albanians here are not only those who bear typically Albanian names (Gjin, Llesh, Dede) of whom, nevertheless, there are many, or those with names from the Christian calendar (Dhimiter, Andrea, Aleks, Domenik) which, in general, was unusual for the Slavs. (20) They must be sought also in names with a purely Slavonic form. In fact, cases are not infrequent when a Dobroslav, a Pribislav or an Ivanko turns out to be the son or brother of a Gjin, a Bushat or a Llesh. (21) There are many other instances when the apparently Slav names are nothing but Albanian, because they have taken the Slavonic suffix *ic*: for example, Voglic (Albanian *i vogel*), Kuçevic (Albanian *i kuq*), Flokovci (Albanian *flok*), Gjonovci (Albanian *Gjon*). (22) Also noteworthy is the case of villages which are said explicitly to be inhabited by Albanians and, yet, many of their inhabitants have Slavonic names such as Ivan, Dobravko, Bogisa. (23)

These and many other contradictory elements in the anthroponyms in the well-known chrysobull of Deçan (1330) and other acts of Serbian kings impelled S.Stanojevic, in 1929, to distance himself from the simplistic interpretations made up till that time and to attribute an entirely relative value to the personal names in regard to the true ethnic origin of their bearers. Stanojevic says: "One thing is clear and certain. The personal names on our mediaeval monuments must not be taken in any instance as proofs on the basis of which the nationality of the respective persons can be reliably deduced." (24) Hence, the anthroponymic ratios these sources give for the regions of Kosova, Montenegro and Macedonia (the zones of Shkup, Shtip, Tetova) in no way reflect the true ethnic proportions. D.Kostic added to this conclusion, another, even more weighty, one. Faced with a mixed anthroponymy and many contradictory and discordant elements, he inferred that "we have to do here with a process of the Serbianization of names." (25) The most recent studies of S.Pulaha and M.Ternava, based on the rich onomastic material provided by the Ottoman cadastral registers of the 11th and 16th centuries, give a completely new prospect of the presence of Albanians in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro. (26)

The widespread and intense Serbianization of these names in those territories is more than a normal phenomenon. It is connected with the exceptional conditions created in the Albanian territories through their gradual inclusion in the sphere of action of the Serbian State and church, and it reached its maximum in the 13th and 14th centuries when the Serbs centralized their political and church power. (27) Now we have all the reasons (and the evidence) to suggest that such a Serbianization of names, *which is not spontaneous but imposed by violence*, followed to a systematic policy of assimilation which was savagely applied by the Serbian kings. The Code of Stefan Dusan and its "anti-heretic" provisions constitute its incontrovertible proof.

These religious conversions and the Serbianization of names produced the results the



Serbian kings had envisaged. In many cases, entire Albanian communities, especially in the zones of a more prolonged and intensive Albanian-Slav symbiosis, changed their names. (28) However, this ethnic-cultural assimilation was still in its initial phase. That is why, with the rapid decline of the Serbian state after the death of Dusan (1355) and the beginning of the Ottoman invasion, an inverse process of a return to the old Albanian anthroponymy can be seen along with the Islamization of names in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro. (29) There were also many persons who abandoned Serbian orthodoxy and reconverted to Roman Catholicism; a sensational instance of this reconversion is the Albanian princes of Zeta, the Balsha brothers in 1368, (30) or, later, that of the Zaharia nobles. (31)

The use of violence in the conversion of the Albanians in Kosova, Montenegro, Albania and Northern Macedonia implies that the process met with resistance. In fact, apart from the implicit evidence of the Code of Dusan, there is much else to confirm that the forced conversion and (behind it, Slavianization) did not go smoothly. From a religious and ethnic problem it became a political one. In 1319, we have the organization of an anti-Serbian resistance from Tivar to Durres and in the interior of the country. The rebellious Albanian nobles declared to Pope John XXII their determination "to rise and throw off the yoke of tyranny of the King of Rasa, whose oppression they could no longer endure." (32) Hence, they disclosed the political objective of their stand. In their uprisings of 1319, the revolt of the Albanian nobles of Zeta (Montenegro), led by Dhimiter Suma in 1332, (33) and the rebellion of 1336, (34) the Albanians sought to connect themselves with Papacy by declaring their loyalty to Catholicism. Nevertheless, in this act of legality, it is not difficult to distinguish a certain political reason. Although, as Sufflay noted, Albanians were not known for any special religious enthusiasm, (35) they became members of the great coalition of Catholic powers of Europe by announcing their devotion to Rome. Inspired by the Papacy against the Serbian "schismatics" the coalition ensured external support for the Albanian position. In 1319, 1332 and 1336, the Albanian rebels co-ordinated their actions with those of the Angevins of Naples in the south and those of Hungary and Croatia which were disturbing Serbia on its northern borders. (36) Undoubtedly, this "internationalization" of the relations of the Albanian "heretics" with the Serbian State forced the latter to take two contradictory stands. On the one hand, it intensified its efforts to eliminate the "heresy" as a "destabilizing" factor (D. Bogdanovic). On the other hand, however, during fierce confrontation with this coalition, the Serbs had to retreat. In 1354, for example, Stefan Dusan in unusual robes of "repentance", promised Pope Innocent VI that he would not permit the persecution of Catholics in the Serbian Kingdom and even disclosed his own Catholic "vocation" by expressing his desire that he, the "merciless annihilator" of the "Latin heresy", would convert to Catholicism. (37) It was not the first time that a Serbian king, simply for reasons of momentary political opportunism, played the card of conversion to Catholicism, an act which, obviously, never took place. (38) Still, the acts of abjuration like that of Dusan in 1354 indicate the difficulties caused to Serbian kings by the resistance of the Albanians, especially, after they entered the anti-Serb bloc of catholic Europe in 1319 and 1336. Guillaume Adam stressed this factor when he indicated that the northern Albanian territories, in rebellion at that time (1332), became operational base for the European crusade against Serbia. It was not without reason that he attributed the success of the allies' cause to the military contribution of the Albanians who were "fearless and good fighters". (39)

The Albanian resistance to the Serbian State reached a high level of mobilization because the war against "schismatics" was, for them, much more than a war against purely religious enemy. Besides the defence of their national identity, they intended "to throw off the tyranny of the king of Rasa", as the Albanian rebels put it in 1319. That is why, in the movements against the Serbian "schismatics", apart from Catholics, there were also Orthodox believers of the Byzantine and even the Serbian rite. Byzantines and Serbians like Teodor Muzaka or Vladislav Jonima, "count of Dioclea and of Coastal Albania" (40) were thus violating what



must have been their religious beliefs. Together with them, there was a religious personage like Tanush Topia from a family which passed easily from Orthodoxy to Catholicism and, then, the dubious experience of Patarinism. (41) The figure of the "Latin heretics" began to be blended with that of Albanian rebels. And, like the movements of the Bohemian Hussites, the Albanian resistance against the Serbs in the 14th century, stripped it of its religious covering, reveals its true political, national content.



## NOTES

- 1 A.Boué, *La Turquie d'Europe*, vol.IV, Paris 1840, pp.427-428. Cf. S.Novakovic, *Zakonik Stefana Dusana*, Belgrade 1898, pp. 153-154.
- 2 *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis*, ed. O.Gorka, Gracoviae 1916, p.31.
- 3 Brocardus, *Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum*, in "Historiens des Croisades (Historiens Armeniens)", II, pp.484-485.
- 4 According to C.Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, Gotha 1911, p. 407.
- 5 The example of the Albanian towns Drisht and Ballec, which in 1356 were described as "almost totally ruined by the schismatics" (ab ipsis schismaticis quasi totaliter dissipatum), *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis illustrantia*, (further *Acta albanniae* ed. L.Thaloczy, C.Jirecek, M.Sufflay, vol.II (Vindobonae 1918), no. 119.
- 6 See Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, p.120.
- 7 *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.552.
- 8 *Acta Albaniae*, I, nos. 552, 554; 55, no.20.
- 9 See C.Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, I.Band, Gotha 1911, pp.116-117.
- 10 R.Mihajlcic, *Selista*, in "Zbornik Filozofskog Fakulteta", knj. 9-1, Belgrade 1967, p.201.
- 11 *Acta Albaniae*, II, no.20.
- 12 M.Sufflay, *Biologie des Albanesischen Volksstammes*, in "Ungarische Rundschau", 5 (1916), p.11.
- 13 P.Bogdanus, *Cuneus Prophetarum*, pars prima, Petavii MDCLXXXV (introduc).
- 14 S.Novakovic, *Zakonik Stefana Dusana*, Belgrade 1898, p.154.
- 15 M.Mladenovic, *L'état serbe au Moyen Age*, Paris 1931, p.103.
- 16 G.Ostrogorsky, *Problemes des relations Byzantino-Serbes au XIV siecle*, in "Byzanz und die Welt der Slawen", Darmstadt 1974, p.83.
- 17 S.Pulaha, *The Albanians and Their Territories*, Tirana 1982, p.419.
- 18 D.Bogdanovic, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, Belgrade 1985, p.27.
- 19 The persecutions of Catholics (forced rebaptism, the conversion of Catholic churches to Serbian Orthodox churches and the expulsion of the Catholic clergy) were admitted by Tzar Stefan Dusan himself in a letter of "repentance" written in 1354 to Pope Innocent VI; see Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, p.408.
- 20 See, for example, *The Chrysobull of Deçan (1335)* in "Acata Albaniae" I, no.798.
- 21 M.Ternava, *The Albanians in the Feudal State of Deçan*, in "The Albanians and Their Territories", p.218, 222.
- 22 *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.679, II, no.46.
- 23 M.Ternava, *art.cit.* p.216.
- 24 S.Stajonevic, *Licna imena i narodnost u Srbiji srednjega veka* in "Juznoslovenskij Filolog", VIII, Belgrade 1928-1929, p.154.
- 25 D.Kostic, *Milos Kopilic-Kobilic-Obilic*, in "Revue Internationale des Etudes Balkaniques" Iere année, Belgrade 1935, p.238. Of the same opinion is also S.Cirkovic; see his new article, *Les Albanais à la lumière des sources historiques des Slaves du Sud*, in "Les Illyriens et les Albanais", Belgrade 1988, p. 353, note 32.
- 26 See the works of these two authors collected in the volume *The Albanians and their territories*, Tirana 1982; see also S.Cirkovic, *Les Albanais à la lumière des sources historiques des Slaves du Sud*, in "Les Illyriens et les Albanais", Belgrade 1988, p.354.
- 27 C.Jirecek, *Staat und Gesellschaft in der mittelalterlichen Serbien*, I, p.45.
- 28 A typical case is that of the community of Catholic Albanians of the Kuçis. In 1610, they were already "half schismatics and half Catholics (meta schismatica e l'altra meta latina)". Thus they were half-way on the road to their Slavization; see: M.Sufflay, *Srbi i arbanasi*.



- Belgrade 1925, p.77; S.Pulaha, *The Albanians and Their territories*, p.368.
- 29 S.Pulaha, *The Albanians and Their Territories*, pp. 360, 420, 444.
- 30 *Acta Albaniae*, II, no.242.
- 31 A.Theiner, vol.1, Rome 1863, p.348.
- 32 *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.648.
- 33 C.Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, p. 352; *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.648.
- 34 *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.805.
- 35 M.Sufflay, *Die Kirchenzustände in mittelalterlichen Albaniae*, in "Illyrische Albanische Forschungen", Munchen und Leipzig, 1916, p.190.
- 36 *Acta Albaniae*, I, nos. 648. (notes) 805.
- 37 According to C.Jirecek, *Geschichte der Serben*, p.408.
- 38 D.Obolensky, *Il Commonwealth bizantino*, Bari 1974, p.356. Uros II acted in the same way in 1308, see *Acta Albaniae*, I, no.588.
- 39 Brocadus, *Directorium ad Passagium Faciendum*, p. 485.
- 40 *Acta Albaniae*, I, nos.648, 450.
- 41 A.Ducellier, *La facade maritime de l'Albanie au Moyen Age*, Tessalonike 1981, p.554.



## KOSOVA UNDER THE ALBANIAN FEUDAL STATE OF THE BALSHAS

In the second half of the 14th century, when Albanian reached its highest political, social and cultural level before the Ottoman invasion, and when the Balkans, like Europe, saw the first signs of the crisis of the feudal system and the dawn of the modern times, (1) Kosova was included within an Albanian feudal state - that of the Balshas, for one and a half decade.

In this short period in the Mediaeval history of the province, there are interesting sources which reveal the ethnic reality of Kosova. Being part of the Balsha State by accident, the Kosova population became the subject of its own history and, for this reason, a weighty factor in the historical developments in Western Balkans, where two ethnic groups met : Albanians and Southern Slavs. The Albanian state political factor gave the opportunity to the Kosovar population to further affirm its awareness of the community of the language, culture and territory within the area of a relatively large Albanian state from Budva to Novobrdra and from Himara to Kostur. In these circumstances, we understand the attitude of the Serbian contemporaries who did not identify Kosova and the Albanian population there with the Serbian country and why this territory relapsed under the political domination of the Serbian feudal lords.

\*

\*

\*

The history of the Balsha State is illuminated by a relatively large documentary source which can be obtained from the contemporary neighbouring feudal states. The main outlines of its history can be rebuilt with incontestable facts from different chancelleries as well as with hypotheses about the weight of this state within the Albanian territories, the Balkans and the Adriatic-Mediterranean zone, about its survival for more than a century in complex relations with a number of states like Venice, Ragusa, Hungary, the neighbouring Slav states, the Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Turkey etc.

The history of the Balsha family and their state has attracted the interest of a wide historiographic literature devoted to Mediaeval Balkans. In different times and places there are different answers to the problem of the ethnic belonging of this feudal family and the state it built. For some authors, the Balshas were from Zeta, i.e. Serbians, for some they were Serbianized Vallachians, others believe that they were French, and others think that they were Albanians. (2) Their Albanians belonging is finding wider support as an historical truth not only among the Albanian historians, but also the Yugoslav ones. One year ago, the historiographical literature about the Balshas brought interesting proof about the same argument. The Yugoslav academic S.Cirkovic emphasized the "most important fact that whole generations of Balshas ruled over Albanian territories." (3) In this statement the Yugoslav historiography picked up the forgotten conclusion made a century ago by the first Serbian critical historian, I.Ruvarac, according to whom the Balshas were not Serbs but Albanians, regardless of the fact that their distant origin might have been Albanian or Vallachian. (4)



Unlike Ruvarac, the present-day Yugoslav historians see in the Albanian Balshas the phenomenon of "assimilation operating through the introduction of the Serbian state political traditions in their policy." (5)

Ocular testimony of the time speak of whole generations of this family and their state. They give an undoubted Albanian physiognomy to the whole history of Balshas, who not only were not Serbianized, but also refused to be mixed up with them. Although there is no direct evidence of the Albanian belonging of the first of the Balshas, or the Old Balsha, we have evidence about one of his sons, Gjergj Balsha I. His Albanian customs are confirmed in a Regusan document which mentions him as a political personality and a friend of their city. (6) The Albanian descent of the third and fourth generation of Balshas is supported by Hungarian, Ottoman and South Slav sources. Venice had close relations with them, too. Gjergj Balsha II, the grandson of Old Balsha, is mentioned among the Ottomans as "the ruler of Albanian Shkodra" and "ruler of Albanians", when they met him both as a friend and as an opponent, when he was captured by them. (7) The Hungarian Emperor, Sigismund, met him in Ulqin (in 1369) and on that occasion accorded to him the desired title of "Prince of Albania", although he ruled only in a narrow strip of the wide area which was known as Albania: From Buna to Budua (8) (outside the present political borders of Albania, in Montenegro). His Albanian descent was undoubted and the 15th century Bulgarian author, Kostandin the Philosopher, who lived in the court of the Serbian feudal lord, Stafan Lazarevic, says that his son, Balsha III, was Albanian, although his mother was a Serb. (9) Grigor Cambfak, who lived in Decan in the end of the 14th century, is another Bulgarian source that confirms this same fact. (10) Up to the last of their generation, the Balshas remained Albanian, as the famous Albanian humanist, Marin Barleti, confirms in his work devoted to the history of Skanderbeg, when he mentions the nephews of the national hero, Gjon and Gjergj Stres Balsha. (11)

The Albanian physiognomy of the Balshas state becomes more clearcut in their political stands towards the problems and requirements arising objectively in the area of the Albanian state, which naturally led to their dissociation, in content and in form, from the Serbian state political traditions. The predominating Catholic population of Albanians in Zeta, which was the original centre of their state, and in the other Albanian territories to which the Balshas extended their domination later, caused them to abandon the Serbian Church and convert to Catholicism in 1369, immediately after proclaiming themselves independent of the Serbian Emperor, Uros. (12) This political and ideological step opened before them new opportunities of attaching ever wider Albanian territories to their state. This can be seen in the fact that they asked the Pope, who consented, to have their own clergy in a number of Albanian Catholic bishoprics; upon which these territories were included in the Balshas state. This further emphasized the distinction between the Balshas and the neighbouring Slav states and the Serbian political and state traditions. They abandoned, the ideological banner of the Serbian Church, under which King Lazar sought to proclaim himself as successor of the political work of Nemanijas. Albanians and descendants of Albanians in a state built on Albanian territories, the Balshas proclaimed themselves, immediately after secession from the Serbian State, as "dominus", "principes", "duke", which were western titles, in open contrast to the "knjaz", "kralj", "zupan", which were still in use among their Serbian counterparts. (13) The heraldic signs in their standards and coins (the head of mountain wolf) are evidence of any borrowing or affinity with the Serbian state traditions. (14) The Balshas like so many Albanian princes used the Slav language in their chancelleries, but this was not considered by the contemporaries as a sign of their slav assimilation. The policy of marriages is a direct expression of the political interests dictated by the Albanian environment in which the Balshas built their state. All their generations were connected with the most powerful feudal families of Northern, Central and Southern Albania : with the Zaharias twice, with the Dukagjinis and the Topias three times as well as with the Kastriotis and with the Muzakas in the south. In this way they strengthened



their connections with the local nobility, which is described in great detail in the Memoirs of Gjon Muzaka, they strengthened the Albanian character of their family and state. They did not contract any relation with the Bosnian feudal families in the north, but when basic state interests in the Albanian territories of Zeta and Kosova required, they did not hesitate to enter marriage connections with Serbian families, seeing them as necessary political alliances, which they broke readily when the occasion required.

Thus, Gjergj Balsha I first married the daughter of king Vukasin, who ruled in Kosova and other Albanian territories about the year 1370. But he dissolved the marriage before marching into Kosova. The same interests in Kosova guided him in marrying the widow of the feudal lord Zarko, - the former ruler of Zeta - which he soon broke off, and Gjergj Balsha II, who married the daughter of Knjaz Lazar with the aim of preserving the Balshas' relations with this region in the difficult political conditions which were created for this principality after 1385, with the Ottoman invasions. (15)

The expansion of the state of Balshas with the inclusion of the former Serbian occupied territories of Kosova, placed them objectively in political positions similar to the emperor of the Serbian state. That is the reason why, at the end of 1373, in a manoeuvre to ensure free trade in the state of Balshas, Ragusa accorded to them the St. Demetrius' tribute, which was levied from the Slav territories of Konavlja, Trebinja and Dracevica, thus repeating the practice it had pursued with the former Serbian emperor who ruled these territories. Only the Albanian Balshas and no Serbian feudal family could guarantee this kind of privilege to Ragusa. The extension of the Balshas in Kosova, where the Serbian state had already established the centre of its independent church, brought about the interesting fact that the Albanian Catholic feudal lords, like Gjergj Balsha I and his grandson Gjergj Balsha II, presided Serbian church assemblies in 1375 and 1385. It was their political strength which placed them in such positions.

On account of their political activity, connected with and orientated by the requirements of an Albanian environment, the history of Balshas and their state became an inseparable part of the history of Albanian territories and the Albanians as a whole during the second half of the 15th century and later. It is not without sound reasons that Marin Barleti and Gjon Muzaka described them in such terms. From the beginning of his political activities Skanderbeg, the national hero, declared that he would continue the state political traditions of the Balshas. This is confirmed in the chronicles of the Venetian. I. Bembo: "In zorni tre conquisto tutto il paese, digiendo essere herede di Balsa e volendo le terre che fu di questo" (In three days he conquered the whole country, saying that he was heir of the Balshas and wanted the lands that were theirs). (16)

\*

\*

\*

It is a known fact in historiographical literature that Kosova was under the rule of Balshas. But this fact is passed over quickly and its historical dimensions have not been correctly assessed. It is supposed that the Balshas did not extend their rule throughout the whole territory of Kosova, but only in Prizren and Peja and stayed there from 1372 up till the death of Gjergj Balsha I, at the end of 1378. (17) The history of Kosova under the state of Balshas occupies only a short span of time.

A number of sources of the time, which illuminate the long-established economic, trade, and cultural relations between Zeta and Kosova, due to the ethnic and cultural community of the



Albanian population which lived in them, show that the orientation of the Balshas towards Kosova was not an accidental move. The situation in Kosova explains the underlying reasons why the Balshas contested the Serbian rule precisely in its political centre, Kosova, only three years after having taken Zeta from it. Other sources on the Balshas' action in Kosova make direct or indirect confirmation of the fact that they found a broad support among the Albanian population of that region. At the end of 1371, after the defeat at the Marica battle and the death of Vukasin and Emperor Uros, the political fate of Kosova and other Albanian territories to the south of it, down to Oher and Kostur, became unsettled. Nikola Altomanovic and knjaz Lazar, on the one hand, and the Albanian Balshas on the other, began to manoeuvre for these territories. (18) When the Serbian states had a number of political figures, like those mentioned above, or TGvrtko, the successors of king Vukasin, the Dejanovic brothers and others, it was the Balshas who became masters of Kosova within a very short time. At first they captured Prizren, where Gjergj Balsha I was received with great enthusiasm, while other forces moved on Oher and Kostur under the command of Balsha II and Andrea Muzaka. The Croat historian, G. Gelcich, who colourfully described the entry of the Balshas in Kosova, writes that the event was celebrated in a popular song in which the Balshas are mentioned as "liberators". (19) Thus, the popular song provides another indirect argument about the fact that most of the population of Kosova was Albanian. If the opposite were true, the Balshas could not have been described as "liberators" of Kosova. The Balshas extended their dominions to the northernmost parts of the region. In this situation Ragusa could guarantee the freedom of movement of its merchants in the territory of Kosova in 1373 only with the help of the new masters. In 1377, when the Bosnian king Tvrtko, occupied Konavlja, Dracevica and Trebinja and arrogated to himself the tribute of San Demetrius, the Balshas changed their relations with Ragusa. They increased the customs duties in the old customs posts and set up a new one deep in Kriva-Rjeka near Novobrdra. Despite the reaction of Ragusans, who insisted on the old practice, which ruled out such a tribute, the Balshas continued to levy customs duties at Kriva-Rjeka, not only while Gjergj Balsha I was alive but also throughout the rule of his brother, Balsha II (1379-1385). When the latter became the prominent figure of the state of Balshas, he declared that the Ragusans had to pay customs duties at Kriva-Rjeka, "as in the time of my brother Gjergj." (20) This act remained in force up till the beginning of 1386, when upon the death of Balsha II at the battle of Savra (1385), Gjergj Balsha II, his nephew, entered a new agreement with the Ragusans and lifted the customs barriers altogether. (21) Other facts prove that Kosova remained under the Balshas. Only in 1387 did the Ragusans enter a similar commercial agreement with the Dukagjinis, who according to the folk song ruled in the territories of Prizren, and with the Serbian King Lazar and Vuk Brankovic, who were allies of Gjergj Balsha II. (22) Hence, the claim that King Lazar ruled in Novobrdra cannot stand. The coins with Latin letters minted at Novobrdra under the Balshas show the opposite. (23) The claim that after 1375 Kosova was ruled by Vuk Brankovic is baseless. That it was not he, but Gjergj Balsha II who ruled in Kosova in 1385, is confirmed by the fact that the latter, even though an Albanian Catholic, presided the Serbian Church Assembly at Peja in the same date, without having greater title to this office than Brankovic, had he been lord of the province.

The Balshas' rule in Kosova had direct consequences on the destiny of the Serbian Church. A series of documents speak of the desperate situation of this ideological and political institution during that period. The later generations of the Serbian clergy described it as a real "storm", in which "its wealth" and even the sacred throne of the "patriarch and apostolic titles" were "attacked in a banditlike fashion." (24)

The Serbian Church came under the control of three classes which existed within the state of the Balshas: the Catholic and Orthodox clergy, the Bulgarian Church of Oher, and the Byzantine mitropoly of Durres which wanted their benefices back. In a description of this situation, the continuator of Danilos' chronicles writes that they attacked the Serbian Church instigated by



"careerism and three other religious ambitions." (25)

Purely Serbian forces outside Kosova, the Serbian clergy of Mount Athos and King Lazar, strove to save their Church. They reconciled with Byzantium, which recognized the rights of the Serbian Church under heavy conditions, and promised to behave well with its "sister" church, which were impatient to unite with it.

Although the Byzantine Patriarchate recognized the independence, of the Serbian Church, its positions in Kosova were shaken. The Balshas had many reasons to remove its see from Peja and to refuse the permission for the Serbian church assembly to be held there (1375). Prizren was seen as the place from which its activity could be kept under secure control, therefore it was designated as its new centre. Moreover, for the first time in the history of this church, a Bulgarian cleric, Jefrem, and not a Serbian, was placed in the post of the patriarch. This put an end to the history of the rule of Serbian patriarchs. Other radical measures which are connected with Balsha II further weakened the Serbian church in Kosova. After a period of four or five years (1379-1380), Jefrem was compelled to abandon his post. He was succeeded by a new patriarch, called Spiridhon, who set up his centre close to king Lazar, at Zic in Rasa. This move was accompanied with the building of new Serbian churches. The rule of the Balshas aggravated the crisis of the Serbian Church in Kosova with the events in the region of Ser. (26) Efforts were made later to bring the centre of the Serbian Church back to its original place in Kosova, as the convention of 1385 in Peja shows, but still it could not consolidate its positions before the year 1397, when the successors of King Lazar began to rule in Kosova as vassals of the Ottomans. Precisely in this period we have another testimony of the weakened situation of the Church. The evidence comes from the nun Jevdhokia at the greatest Serbian monastery in Kosova - Decan. "It was burned and sacked by the cursed Ismailates and left uncared - for by its *former holders*, the property had been robbed and there was great devastation." (27) Precisely because the Serbian Church was weakend during the domination of the Balshas, in 1386 the Byzantine Church considered the Serbian patriarch as a simple archbishop. (28)

The political union of Kosova with the other Albanian territories under the state of Balshas for 15 years left its imprints in the economic and social life of the province and above all in the consciousness of the Albanian population and among the neighbouring Slavs. In this period, the Albanians of Kosova saw important political phenomena which accompanied the evolution of the Balshas' principality. During the rule of Balsha II, the principality grew into a centralized unitarian feudal state, with its centre now no longer in Shkodra, but in Durres; and since 1382 Balsha II proclaimed himself "Duke of Durres", while Gjon Muzaka describes him as "king". (29)

By sharing its political destiny with this Albanian state, the Albanian population of Kosova did not give an opportunity to the neighbouring Serbian feudal states, which were reorganizing themselves to change the situation in the province. Neither "king" Tvrtko nor the great "knjaz" of the Serbs or of the "Serbian lands", Lazar, had any better results. Only when the principality of the Balshas was directly hit by the Turks, when it was fragmented into a number of small holdings and when Gjergj Balsha II began to seek alliances with the Balkan forces for coping with the Ottoman invasion, was Kosova partly reduced to the rule of Serbian knjaz Lazar and Vuk Brankovic. Nevertheless, even after the Battle of Kosova, Prishtina and its neighbourhood remained outside direct Serbian rule, although the Serbian vassals retained their possessions. (30) Under Ottoman suzerainty the Serbian feudal lords managed to establish their domination in Kosova. It is not an accident that the name of Vuk Brankovic, as ruler of this province, fails to appear in all the sources of the time. Except for the information about his death, they carry no other detail about him. He is not mentioned as ruler of Kosova either by Konstantin the Philosopher or his own son, Georg Brankovic, until 1445. This happened only because in 1392-1395 he managed to annex the whole province to his dominions as vassal of



the Ottomans. The Lazarevices, too, with the assistance of the Ottomans, established themselves there in the year 1397.(31) In these conditions the awareness of the Albanian population in Kosova was further consolidated.

The clearest evidence of the ethnic consciousness of the Albanians in Kosova is found among the Serbs themselves, in the early writings about the Battle of Kosova. They, more than anyone else, understood how inaccurate was in reality and what consequences would follow at that time if Kosova was identified with the Serbian state, as Ragusa and Venice did when they identified the Albanian ethnic reality of Kosova with the Serbian political-state superstructure. In the conditions when this population did not have its own state, it preferred silence about its ethnic belonging. The modern Yugoslav historians are greatly surprised to find that the anonymous Serbian folk singer, who first evoked the events in Kosova, mentioned the Turks as such, while he failed to give any ethnic qualification to those who opposed them or to the list of such towns as Krusevac, Prishtina, Vucitern and Zvecan, which had been former dominions of the Serbian state. Kosova was not described as Serbian by the bard who sang the song in the court of Stefan Music. (32) Konstandin the Philosopher also adopted a cautious stand, and did not attach the Serbian ethnonym to Kosova when he described the battle, while he was capable of distinguishing clearly what was Serbian and what was Albanian at that time, as results from the identification of the ethnic belonging of the Balshas' state or the state of the despot Stefan Lazarevic. It is interesting to see from this same angle the first lines of the early inscription on the pillar raised to the memory of Lazar in Kosova, 15 years after the battle, which is generally believed to have been written by his own son, Stefan Lazarevic.

1) Come, man of the Serbian land/ 2) Are you a stranger or native in these parts ?/ 3) Whoever you may be/ When you come to this field which is called Kosova... (33)

The author's cautious attitude not to attach the Serbian attribute to Kosova, but to the man mentioned in the inscription, is evident. The author chooses to give this attribute to the Serbian outsider, but not to the natives. There is no doubt that the Albanian population of the regions was such a majority that the author could not call Kosova a Serbian land. And it is understandable that he had to be careful about this issue, because Kosova at that time was politically under Serbian rule. History had given an unforgettable lesson to the Lazarevices in connection with Kosova. It had never been Serbian land, and even Lazarevic himself had always considered it a land of foreign ethnic composition.

The humanist writer of the 15th century, Martin Segon, who had an intimate knowledge of the ethnic reality in Kosova as priest of Novobrda and later as archbishop of Ulqin, found it appropriate to describe the inhabitants of these territories with no other name than the ancient "Dardans", so as to make the distinction with the term "Mysiae", which he attached to the Serbs, or the qualifier "Servian" which he uses for himself. (34)

Seeing the situation with the eyes of these contemporaries, it would have been inappropriate to claim that this Albanian population of Novobrda was a mass of Albanians who had come to the depths of Kosova, as appears from the debts register of the Ragusan Mihal Lukarevic in the years 1432-1440. (35) The compact Albanian population of this territory, with a consolidated ethnic and political consciousness, survived the process of centuries-long confrontation with the foreigners.



## NOTES

- 1 A.Buda, *Historical Writings*, vol. I, Tirana 1986, p.259.
- 2 *Yugoslav Encyclopaedia*, Albanian edition, vol.1 A-Bib, Zagreb, 1984, p.405, gives them as Zetians, i.e. Serbs. I.Bozic, *Istorija Crnoje Gore*, Belgrade 1969, p.29, says that they were Serbianized Vallachians; a number of authors such as Lenormant, Maslatrie and others, mentioned by C.Jirecek in *Geschichte der Serben*, Gotha 1911, p.425, consider them as French; they were Albanians in the opinion of Sufflay in *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, vol. 1, Munchen und Leipzig, 1916, p.298, and in F.S.Noli's opinion, *Works*, vol.4, Tirana 1989, pp.224 and 237.
- 3 S.Cirkovic, *Les albanaises à la lumière des sources historiques des Slaves des Sud*, in "Illiri i Albanci", Belgrade 1988, p. 356.
- 4 I.Ruvarac, *O knjezu Lazaru*, Novi Sad, 1887, p.410.
- 5 S.Cirkovic, *art.cit.*, p.356.
- 6 I.Tadic, *Pisma i uputstva Dubrovacke Republike*, Belgrade 1935.
- 7 S.Pulaha, *The Albanian-Turkish War of the 15th Century*, Ottoman sources, Tirana, 1968, pp.12, 13 and on.
- 8 *Acta e diplomata Res Albaniae Mediae Aetatis Illustrantia*, Vindobonae 1918, vol.II (hereafter A.Alb.), no. 537/579.
- 9 V.Jagic, *Kostandin Filozof i njegov zivot Stefans Lazarevica despota srpskog*, in Glasnik SUD, 42 (1875).
- 10 A.Davidov et alii, *Zitije na Stefan Secanski o Grigorii Cambfak*, Sofia 1983, p.114.
- 11 M.Barleti, *History of Skanderbeg*, Tirana 1967, pp.75, 97 and 113.
- 12 A.Alb. II, 242, 243, *Archivio di stato di Venezia, Deliberazioni Miste Senati*, R. 32, p.139 (137, 140).
- 13 *History of Albania*, Tirana 1967, p.242.
- 14 F.Lenormant, *Denier des Balsha III*, in "Revue Numismatique", Nouvelle Serie VI, Paris 1861; A.Degrand, *Souvenirs de la haute Albanie*, Paris 1901, p.182.
- 15 M.Orbini, *Il regno degli slavi*, Pesaro 1605, p.287; G.Musachio, *Historia e genealogia della casa Musachia*, in Cs.Hopf, "Chronique grecoromanes", Berlin 1873.
- 16 Raccolta Foscari, *La bibliothèque de Vienne*, Cod. n.6215, R.5, and cont.; M.Barleti, *The Siege of Shkodra*, Tirana 1959, p.209; G.Musachio, *op.cit.*
- 17 *Yugoslav Encyclopaedia*, p.506.
- 18 M.Orbini, *op.cit.* pp. 278, 289 and 290.
- 19 G.Gelcich, *La Zedda e la dinastia dei Bascidi*, Spalato, 1989, pp.84 and 86.
- 20 A.Alb. II, 369, 388.
- 21 *Ibidem*, II, 391.
- 22 *Ibidem*, II, 391.
- 23 S.Dimitrijevic, *Novac Knjeza Lazara u odnosu na novac drugih oblasnih gospodara*, in "O Knjezu Lazaru", Belgrade 1975, pp.185-223.
- 24 Miklossich-Muller, *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevei*, I, Vindobonae, 1869, 560-564; Ostrogorski, *Serbska Oblast*, pp. 125-126.
- 25 M.Dinic, *Iz Dubrovackog arhiva*, I, Belgrade 1957, pp. 37-90.
- 26 *O Knjezu Lazaru*, Belgrade 1975, pp. 13-14, etc.
- 27 S.Novakovic, - *Zakonski spomenici srpskih drzava srednjeka veka*, Belgrade 1912, 655; F.Miklosich, *Monumenta Serbica spectantiam historiam Serbiae*, Bosnae, Ragusii, Vienna 1858, pp. 264-265.
- 28 M.Lacaris, *Le patriarchat de Péc a-t-il été reconnu par l'Eglise de Constantinople en 1375* Melanges Charles Diehl, vol.I, Paris 1930, pp. 171-175.



29 P.Bogdani, *Les tendances a l'unification étatique des territoires albanais dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle et du début du XVe* in "Studia Albanica", 1982, pp.221-231.

30 Dj.Trifunovic, *Srpski srednjovekovni spisi o knjezu Lazaru i kosovskom boju*, Krusevac 1968, pp.58-59.

31 I.Bozic, *Neverstvo Vuka Brankovica*, in "O knjezu Lazaru"; pp. 240-243.

32 *Kosovo duh srpskih naroda*, Belgrade 1989, p.89.

33 Dj.Trifunovic, *Srpski srednjovekovni spisi*, op.cit., p.279.

34 A.Petrusi, *Martino Segono di Novo Brdo vescovo di Dulcigno, Un umanista serbo-dalmata del tardo Quattrocento, Vita e opere*, Roma 1981, p.109.

35 M.Dinic, *Iz Dubrovackog arhiva*, I, Belgrade 1957, pp. 37-90.



ALAIN DUCCELLIER  
(Toulouse - France)

## HAVE THE ALBANIANS OCCUPIED KOSOVA ? (\*)

After the recent grave events in Kosova, it is difficult to analyse this problem with all the intellectual seriousness demanded of an historian; furthermore, since, from that time, the press carries articles in support of the "Serbian" thesis, regarded by many as quite a logical one, any voice in opposition to it remains isolated and seems to be inspired by an "Albanophily" which is *a priori* considered doubtful.

Let us make ourselves clear : there is no solid argument today to determine the nationality of this or that region, especially in the Balkans, except the existence there of a recognized national minority. In this sense, Kosiva, inhabited by a population two thirds of which is Albanian, (\*\*) of course could not be treated otherwise but as Albanian, and this without the slightest hit on uniting it with the political entity called "Albania".

Seeing the persistent use of historical facts to prove that the Serbs, as the oldest inhabitants who were allegedly driven out by Albanians later, have a "right" to Kosova, it would not be irrelevant to demonstrate that in this case, at least, history and the present situation coincide.

In a recent article Michel Aubin points out that Kosova was the "economic and political centre of the Serbian mediaeval kingdom in the 13th and 14th centuries", (1) which is true. So, it seems that only the Turkish occupation, after driving the Serbs out of the best lands, finally forced them, especially in 1690 and 1738, to emigrate towards south Hungary and substituted them with Islamized elements brought over from Northern Albania.

Let us not insist on the fact that the establishment of a centre of political and economic power on a certain territory is by no means a guarantee, particularly in the Middle Ages, for the ethnic predomination of those who have political power. Thus, the small "Serbian" despotate of Seres in Northern Greece managed to rule from 1355 to 1371 a population the overwhelming majority of which was Greek ... (2)

Nevertheless, let us agree that the Serbs were the majority in Kosova in the 13th century. But then the question arises: who lived in this region before ? The Slavs are an Indo-European people who came to Europe at a later period, since the frequent waves of their invasions occurred in the 6th and 7th centuries. (3) At this time many centuries of Romanization had failed to liquidate the old autochthonous people : the Dacians in Romania, the Thracians in Bulgaria, the Illyrians in Dalmatia, Albania and Macedonia. As for Kosova, it is an undeniable fact that at least from the 18th century b.o.e. many Illyrian political states emerged, and gradually passed from the tribal stage to small real kingdoms like the Dardanians, the Penestes, the Paeonians (to mention only the most important). (4) All the recent studies, both linguistic and archaeological, try to prove that the Illyrians are certainly the direct ancestors of the Albanians. (5) As regards archaeology, the study of ceramics and ornaments (earrings, bracelets, rings and especially fibulae) testifies to an extraordinary continuity in the designs and technology between the ancient Illyrian and the new artifacts discovered in the mediaeval settlements which may be dated to the 6th and 7th centuries of the new era (the Dalmaca castle in the vicinity of Puka, and especially Kruja); this is so true that the Yugoslav archaeologist B. Covic has dated the material found in Dalmaca castle to the 6th-7th centuries of the new era (6). However, we must remember that the excavations in the Dalmaca castle began in the last century and that all agreed then that they were testimony of the "old Slavonic civilization". (7)



Of course, this Illyrian-Albanian continuity is not proved only in the present-day territory of Albania. The finds in the necropolis of Melje in the vicinity of Virpazar (Montenegro) and in two settlements in Ohri zone in Macedonia have brought to light objects belonging to the same civilization. (8) Of course, the intensive activity of Albanian archaeologists since Liberation is the only one to be considered to explain the very rich finds unearthed in their national territory.

Lacking any document which would prove the liquidation or the emigration of the local Illyrian population in the course of Slavonic invasions, it is natural to think that during the Late Middle Ages Kosova, like all of Albania, has had mainly an Illyrian population, that is, Albanian. No doubt, a phenomenon of Slavization is noted and this is best shown by place names, which have little value in determining the ethnic character of a people. In spite of the large number of Slavonic toponyms found in Albania at present, no one can ever think that the majority of its population was Slav. Indeed, such an argument would never serve the advocates of the "Serbian thesis", the more so since most of the Slavonic toponyms in Kosova and Albania seem to be more Bulgarian than Serbian, which is quite natural because the Bulgarians occupied this zone since the 9th century, and especially at the end of the 10th century, at the height of the last Bulgarian Empire, with Ohri as its capital (9). At that time the Serbs were situated far from Kosova; in fact, in the 9th-10th centuries their first compact colonies were Rasha (Rasa) in the Ibar valley, west of Morava, and Zeta which corresponds broadly to present-day Montenegro. It is precisely when prince Stefan became king in 1217 the Serbian state began to expand and included the zone of Peja (Peç), while the main body of Kosova territories remained outside its borders. It is unnecessary to dwell any longer on this since any "historical" argument does nothing other than refute the "Serbian" thesis, because history points out that the Serbs, in regard to Kosova, are very late comers.

Did the Serbian domination wipe out the ancient Illyrian-Albanian population? In fact, the Serbian texts show the opposite: on the occasion when, in 1348, Stefan Dusan, endowed a gift to the monastery of Saint Michael and Gabriel in Prizren, we learn that in the vicinity of that town there were at least 9 villages described as Albanian (Arbanas). (10) The famous code proclaimed by the same sovereign one year later shows that in many villages under his rule, besides the Slavonic population, there were Wlachs and Albanian elements, which must have been very dynamic since the Tsar was obliged to restrict their settlement on his lands. (11) If the Wlachs and the Albanians come to be called nomads, this is surely not only because they were "shepherds from birth", but merely because of the economic and political pressure of the ruling people. This was happening since 1328 in the regions of Diabolis, Kolonea and Ohri, where J. Kantakuzen speaks of the meeting of the Byzantine Emperor Andronicus III with the "nomadic Albanians" of Central Macedonia. (12) No doubt, the Serbian rule was heavy on the Albanian subjects. Allowing for the obvious propaganda aims of the author, there is certainly some truth in what Guillaume D'Adam propagandist of the crusade, writes in 1332, "... these people, both Latin and Albanian, are under the unbearable and very grave yoke of the prince of the Slavs, whom they despise and hate heartily because they are burdened with heavy taxes, their clergymen are treated scornfully, their bishops and priests are often bound in chains, their noblemen expropriated ... All of them together and individually, thought that they would sanctify their hands if they stained them with the blood of the above-mentioned Slavs." (13)

We must add that the Byzantine authors are sensitive about the unity of the people from Albania to Macedonia; the historian, Laonikos Chalkokondylis of the 15th century, after stressing that the Albanians are quite different from the Serbs and the Bosnians, (14) says that no other people resembles the Macedonians more than the Albanians. (15)

In these conditions the Turkish occupation began in the second half of the 14th century, and it is true that at this juncture the Albanians affirmed themselves again in Kosova, but, of course, not in the way the question is usually presented, as if the Albanians came on the "enemy band-waggons"; on the contrary, from the Shkodra Lake up to Kosova they united and



resisted together with the other Christian peoples.

At the time of the decisive battle of 1389, the Greek authors mention, apart from the Serbs and the Bulgarians, also, the Albanians of the North, those of Himara, Epirus and the coastal zone. (16) The Turkish chronicler, Idrisi Bitlisi, mentions the participation of the Albanians of the Shkodra region, whose prince, Gjergj Balsha, led 50 000 men in the battle; (17) the same data are provided by the other Ottoman chroniclers, Ali and Hoxha Saadeddin. (18)

The defeat of 1389 totally disorganized the Serbian state and left a free field of action to the most powerful local princes, including the Albanian princes of the north and the northeast. The most distinguished among them was Gjon Kastrioti, Skanderbeg's father, who, from an original ruler of the mountainous region of Mat, extended his principality from the mouth of the Ishem River up to Prizren, at the centre of Kosova. In 1420 he granted Ragusa the trade privilege from "his coastal lands up to Prizren" (19) for trade. This new Albanian state brought about the development of a class of merchants from a population which had been discouraged from this pursuit. The archives of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) show that a number of Albanian merchants of Ragusa voluntarily stayed in Kosova. This is proved by a letter which the Republic of Ragusa sent Marco de Tani in Prishtina, (20) in March 1428, after the Kastriotis had submitted to the Turks, and again in 1448 in the same town we find the other Albanian merchant Kimo Mati de Tani. (21)

Therefore, there is no reason to think that at this stage of their conquest the Ottomans relied especially on the Albanians to oppose the Slavs. It is not futile to recall that the Albanians were then Christians like the Serbs and were not in any way ready to submit to the Ottomans. If this is the place to speak of the deeds of Skanderbeg, who carried out some of his battles on the borders of Kosova, we shall state that the Byzantine historian, Dukas, in the middle of the 15th century, presents as the main reason of the Turkish triumph the reduction of the number of Albanians from Dalmatia to Thracia. (22) Whereas the Turkish chronicles refer to the Albanian uprisings in Kosova, especially those of 1467, when the "rebels" plundered the herds of cattle in the region of Tetova under the leadership of a "traitor" by the name of Iskender. (23)

Thus, it is clear that a large Albanian population was living in Kosova even before the Turkish occupation, and it is redundant to explain this fact by supposing an outburst of mass migrations on which the sources are silent. Indeed, the fact that no mention is made of clashes between the Albanians and the Slavs at the time of Tsar Dusan, and the more so during the time of the creation of the principality of Kastrioti, proves that the "Albanian state" extended gradually and was welcomed by the local people in general, because there were many Albanian elements among them. Despite the new information provided by the Ottoman cadastral registers (defterler) recently put at our disposal, it is virtually impossible to determine the relative number of Albanians in relation to that of the Slavs in Kosova in the 15th century. The best example is the publication in 1974, by Selami Pulaha, of the register of the Shkodra Sandjak of 1485, covering the region of Shkodra, Peja, Podgorica (Titograd) and Bihor. (24)

First of all, we must stress the extraordinary objectivity with which S. Pulaha treats the rich toponymy and anthroponymy supplied by this source; we repeat together with him that it is quite ordinary for an Albanian to have a Slav name and vice-versa and that a Slav or Albanian toponym does not determine the nature of the population under discussion. (25) However, it is certain that the common use of a double toponym and anthroponym testifies to an ethnic mixture, the component elements of which may be determined according to regions. In the Shkodra Sandjak (which included the entire zone of Peja), S. Pulaha distinguishes three entities in which the Albanian element is represented in various degrees: the region of Shkodra where the Albanians make up the overwhelming majority, the region of Piper, Shestan, Altunili, where an equilibrium seems to have been established between the two populations; the zone of Peja where the Albanians constitute a considerable minority (26) and where a good number of



villages have Slavonic names but the majority of the population is Albanian.(27) The main conclusion is that such a mixture of the two groups would be quite unimaginable if one of them would have been recently established in this zone; the Ottoman register of Shkodra shows that the Albanians constitute a very old component of the local population, especially in the region of Peja, and apart from others, since we lack information about any massive migration of Albanians towards Kosova before the 16th century, we are induced to think that a considerable part of the Albanians of Kosova had their roots in the ancient Illyrian-Albanian population living there from Antiquity.(28) As for the other part of Kosova, there is still much to be done, but it must be said that a very old cadastral register including also the central Kosova (Vikili) has been preserved. From this register of 1455, the Bosnian historian, A.Hanzic, draws precisely the same conclusions : the very particular mixture of the two peoples implies the permanence of the old Albanian substratum. (29)

It must be added that this Albanian element was consolidated from the beginning of the 15th century with the "economic" immigration to the mineral zone, especially the rich silver mines of Srbrenica and Novo Brdo. These Albanians, nearly all Christians, are masters who emigrated first towards Ragusa from Northern coastal Albania (Tivar, Shkodra), and from the mountainous zones (Mat). (30) However, these masters have been established in Kosova for many generations, as is the case with Petar Gonovic Pristenaz (from Prishtina), (31) Johannes Prognovic from Novomonte (Novo Brdo), and, apparently, many others. (32) It is not without interest to point out that this emigration of the Catholic Albanians, attracted by the possibility of working in the mines, continues well into the 17th century and, according to reports by some envoys of the Pope to that region, (33) resulted in their settlement in Novo Brdo, Gjakova, Prishtina and Trepça.

As a conclusion it emerges that in Kosova, it is certainly the Slavs or the Slavonized peoples, the Bulgarians and then the Serbs, who, beginning from the 7th century, occupied a region the population of which was virtually Illyrian-Albanian from antiquity. With the settlement of slavs and the Slavization of part of the local population at the beginning of the 13th century, Kosova became their main political and economic centre. As we pointed out, it is impossible to determine how the two elements stood in relation to one another, though they managed to coexist without major problems. The Ottoman occupation, the gradual weakening of Serbia and, at the same time, the internal reaction and the influx of peaceful immigration of Christian Albanians from the north of Albania resulted in the continuous increase of the Albanian element in Kosova. Still many studies are necessary to confirm this, but there is a possibility that, even before the emigrations of 1690 and 1738, the Albanians constituted a big minority in Kosova, if not the majority of the population. It would be a mistake to forget that the Serbs were not the only ones to depart from the Serbian emigration of 1737-1738 some thousands of Christian Albanians abandoned the mountainous regions of Shkodra to settle round Karlovac, in Croatia, where the Austrian government used them to implement its policy of military colonization; thus these "Klemenner", as they are called in the Austrian texts, found themselves in close contacts with the Serbs who had emigrated in the same period and settled in the same manner. They would preserve their traditions and language up to 1910, the date when their Slavonization (34) was completed.

The "deslavization" of Kosova is thus a fictitious problem: it is only a result of the vast convergent movements of population which have always characterized the history of the Balkan peoples. Based on an ancient substratum that remained Albanian, this migration went on without violence throughout the Middle Ages and in the beginning of modern times. Thus, the events of 1690 and 1738 must be considered only as its final act. Of course, this centuries-old movement of population has nothing to do with the big projects of the Yugoslav government which, between the two wars, tried to bring about the division of Albania with fascist Italy and the mass expulsion of Albanians to Turkey. (35)



## NOTES

- \* Abridged from "Albanie", 13, Paris, 1981, p.10-15.
- \*\* According to Yugoslav sources, in 1989, the Albanians comprised 80 per cent of the population of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosova (ed.).
- 1 Michel Aubin, *Du my the serbe au nationalisme albanais*, Le Monde, 5-6 April 1981, p.2.
- 2 Georges Ostrogorski, *Serska Oblast posle Dusanove smrti* (Seres region after the death of Dusan), Belgrade 1965.
- 3 On Serbs, in particular, H.Gregoire, *The Origin and the Name of the Croats and the Serbs*, "Bizantin", 17, 1945 and S.Novakovic, *Serpske Oblasti X, XI veka* (Serbian territories in the X-XI centuries), "Glasnik Srpskog drustva", 1880, p.48.
- 4 Bibliography on the Illyrians is considerable. Suffice it to mention the archaeological collection "Illyria" (6 published volumes, Tirana 1971-1976); *The Illyrians and the Genesis of the Albanians*, Tirana 1971 and *The Acts of the Conference of Illyrian Studies*, two volumes, Tirana 1974.
- 5 S.Anamali and M.Korkuti, *The Illyrians and the Genesis of the Albanians in the Light of Albanian Archaeological Studies*, in the collection of the same title, pp.11-39; regarding linguistic data, E.Cabej, *The Illyrians and the Albanians*, in the same volume, pp.41-52.
- 6 B.Covic, *Osnovne karakteristike materialne ilira na njihovom centralnom prodrucju*, "Sarajevo Symposium", 1964, p.101. c.f.S.Anamali and M.Korkuti, *The Illyrians and the Genesis of the Albanians*, p.35.
- 7 S.Anamali, *From the Albanian Civilization of the Early Middle Ages*, "Illyrians...", pp. 184-187.
- 8 *Ibidem*, p. 185, 192.
- 9 A.M.Selishev, *Slavjansko naselenie v Albanii*, Sofia 1931, to be carefully studied because of his great Bulgarophil prejudice.
- 10 S.Novakovic, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih drzava srednjega veka* (Juridical sources of the Serbian state in the Middle Ages), Belgrade 1912, pp. 628-701.
- 11 See, in particular, chapters 77 and 82 of the Dusan code (N.Radojic, *Zakonik Cara Stefana Dusana*, Belgrade 1960, pp. 57-58).
- 12 J.Kantakuzen, *Histoire*, Ed.de Bonn, I, p. 55, vol.I, p.279.
- 13 Bokardus, *Directorium ad passagium faciendum*, "Historians of the Crusades", Armenian Historians, II, pp. 484-485.
- 14 Laonikos Chalkokondylis, *Histoire*, Ed.E.Darko, Budapest 1922-1926, I, pp. 277-278.
- 15 *Ibidem*, II, pp. 277-278.
- 16 Hierax, *Chronique sur l'empire des Turcs*, Sathas; *Biblioteca graeca*, I, p.247.
- 17 Idrisi Bitlisi, *Chronique sur l'empire des Turcs*, fols. 188-190, a); in S.Pulaha, *The Albanian-Turkish War of the 15th Century* (Ottoman sources), Tirana 1968, pp. 134-138, 142.
- 18 S.Pulaha, *op.cit.*, pp. 251-252, 297.
- 19 Published by Radonic, *Gjuragj Kastriot Skanderbeg i Arbanija u XV veku*, Belgrade 1942, p.2.
- 20 The archives of the state of Dubrovnik, "Litterae et Commissiones Levantis", X, p.84 v. (March 17, 1428).
- 21 *Ibidem*, XIII, f.248 (January 5, 1448).
- 22 Dukas, *Istoria Turko-Byzantina*, XXIII, 8, Ed. Grecu, Bucharest 1958, p.179.
- 23 Kemalpasazade, *Chronique*, f.254 in Pulaha, *op.cit.*, p.191.
- 24 S.Pulaha, *The Cadastral Register of the Shkodra Sandjak of 1458*, vol. 2, Tirana 1974.
- 25 S.Pulaha, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.



26 *Ibidem*, pp. 33-34.

27 *Ib.*, p. 34, counts 15 villages in this case.

28 S.Pulaha, *op.cit.*, pp. 34-35. It must be noted that this is the conclusion of the great Yugoslav historian, Milan Sufflay, killed in 1925 by the ustasi (M.Sufflay, *Povijest sjevernih arbanasa*, reprinted in Prishtina 1968, pp. 61-62).

29 A.Hanzic, *Nekoliko vijesti o arbanasima na Kosovu i Metohiji v sredinom XV vijeka* (some data on the Albanians of Kosova and Metohija in the middle of the 15th century), "Symposium on Skanderbeg", Prishtina 1969, pp. 201-209. S.Pulaha, *Albanian Element according to the Onomastics of the Regions of the Shkodra Sandjak in the Years 1485-1582*, "Studime historike", 1972, I, p. 63 ss.

30 Consult especially the documents supplied by M.Dinic taken from the state archives of Dubrovnik, and particularly *Livre de Comptes* by Mihal Lukarevic (M.Dinic, *Iz Dubrovackog arhiva I*; Belgrade 1957, example p. 65 ("Dom Marin de Antivaro", "Andria Nicholich Arbanexo de Matia").

31 M. Dinic, *op.cit.*, p.68.

32 *Ibidem*, also the state archives of Dubrovnik, *Pacta Matrimonalia II*, f. 103 v. (December 11, 1459).

33 I. Zamputi, *Reports on the Situation of Northern and Central Albania in the 17th Century*, volume I (1610-1634), Tirana 1968, and the report of apostolic visitor, Pjeter Mazreku, in 1623-1624.

34 L. von Thalloczy, *Die albanische diaspora*, "Illyrisch-Albanische Forschungen" (Vienna 1916), vol.1, p. 314, ss. This article is based on, apart from the archives of Karlovac's metropolis, the *Archiv des Gemeinsamen Finanzministeriums*, Vienna, especially, VI, p. 25, 1739.

35 This is what we conclude from the memorandum of Cubrilovic, *The Expulsion of Albanians*, written in 1937, which envisaged a mass transfer of the Kosova people to Turkey. These problems (especially, the report written on this problem in 1939 by Ivo Andric, and the scale of the Albanian emigration to Turkey between two wars) are dealt with cf. by M.Roux, *Language and the State Power in Yugoslavia. The Case of the Albanians*, "Pluriel" 22, Paris 1980.



CONSTANTIN JIRECEK  
(Vienna-Austria)

## ABOUT THE ALBANIANS IN THE NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN TERRITORIES IN CONTACT WITH THE SLAV POPULATION (\*)

The southern coastal province, a part of the former Praevalis, has taken its name from the Roman town Doclea, which Konstantinus Porphyrogenetes identifies with the deserted ruins of Dioclea through an adaptation of the name of the emperor Diocletianus. The place was called Dioclea in Latin and Diochleia in Greek, and was inhabited by Diocleans or Dioclitians (Diochleis, Diocletianoï), and its Serbian form is Dioklitija. The Serbs called the Adriatic, Sea, "more Dioklitijsko", and the Shkodra Lake, "Dioklitijsko jezero." Gradually, from the 11th century, the name Dioklitija was replaced with that of Zeta (Latin Zenta, Genta), a river, the name of a torrential branch of the Morava River in the centre of the present-day Montenegro. There were the regions of Upper Zeta in the highlands and Lower Zeta round the Shkodra Lake and the coast... The population of Dioclea was very mixed with many vestiges of old inhabitants, Albanians and Romans, along with more recent Slavonic settlers.

...According to the description of Constantinus Porphyrogenetes, in the hinterland, far from the sea and the Danube, lay the country of the early pure Serbs.

... According to him, the country of authentic Serbs comprised the region of Lim and the Upper Drina, including Piva and Tara, the valley of the Ibar and the upper course of the Western Morava.

...For a long time, a good part of the ancient population remained amongst the southern Slavs. The semi-Romanized Illyrians, during the period of the migrations of peoples, withdrew from the mountains between Dalmatia and the Danube and moved towards the southwest. Their centre became the district of Arbanum (Arbanon, Albanon), in Serbian Raban near Kruja, where Ptolemy mentions a tribe of Arbers in the Roman period. In the 11th century, this name, in Latin Arbanenses or Albanenses (Albanoi, Arbanitai) from which the Slavonic form Arbanasi derived, was extended to the whole people. ... In the 14th century the "Arbanenses" appeared under their national name among the peasants of Zhupa of Grbalje, near Kotorr, as well as in the valley of Crmnice northwest of Shkodra Lake, which is purely Serbian today. The name of the herdsmen of Burmazes or Burmazovices in the Stolac region of Hercegovina, mentioned as early as the year 1300, had its origin from the Albanian name Burmad (Albanian, *burre i madh*). In Montenegro, one finds purely Albanian place-names in regions where today nobody speaks Albanian any longer: Shingjon (Albanian: *Shen Gjon*/Saint John), Goljemade (mentioned in 1444, Albanian; *Gojemadh*, *gulae magnae*), Krus (Albanian, *kryq*, from the Latin *crux*), etc. The tribal legends recorded by Hahn and Rowinski and in the volumes of *Naselja*, which derive the Albanian and Serbian tribes from common ancestors are characteristic. The legend of the Vasojevices mentions five brothers: Vaso, Pipo, Ozro, Kraso and Oto as ancestors of today's Serbian tribes of the Vasojevic, Piper and Ozrinic and the present-day Albanian tribes of Krasniqi and Hoti. The genealogy reminds one of the structure of the Illyrian tribal legends in Appianus (23). The legend of Kuc makes the present-day Serbianized Kuçes and Albanian Kastrates and Shaljans originating from three brothers; the inhabitants of Kuc are also mentioned by Marian Bolica of Kotorr (1614) as "Chuzzi Albanesi del rito Romano". In the east, the old Serbian documents of the 14th century mention people with Albanian names (Llesh, Gjon, Gjin, etc.) in and around Prizren. Although during the Early Middle Ages, the Albanians lost many territories, taken from them by the Serbs, they never were a dying people.



...In the Middle Ages they appear as an ancient Christian people with a generally urban culture, who remained closer to the Greeks and Dalmatian Romans than to the newly arrived Serbs. Evidence of the antiquity of their Christianity can be seen in some remnants of the old Latin terminology in their language and the numerous toponyms originating from saints' names. In the documents of the monastery of Deçan (1330) and in the Venetian Cadastral Register of Shkodra (1416) every Albanian has two names, the first is a Christian name, rarely Roman (like Calens from Calenda or Tanusius), or a national name (Barda *bardh*, Progon, Bitri, etc.), while the second name is frequently the name of the tribe or the village, and more rarely, the name of a personal feature such as *i mire* (Mira), *i vogel* (Vogali), etc. Most of these names are known today as names of villages or tribes: Tuz (from 1330), Prekal, Shkrel, Kastrat, etc. In the cadastral register of 1416, for example, in "Villa i Tusi" (Tuzi near Podgorica), the 16 heads of families are called Tusi, beginning from their headman Jurko Tusi, while in Gruaemira Grande (in Albanian *grua e mire*), only 11 of the 20 households were inhabited by Gruaemira people. In the highlands to the east of Shkodra Lake there were large tribes such as the Hoti, frequently, mentioned since 1330 and well-known to this day. In the Middle Ages, however, it was not the tribes but their chiefs and the noblemen who were the determining factor; the history of the present organization of the Albanian highlanders of the North does not permit us to follow it deep into the centuries because of the lack of reports.

#### NOTE

\* Taken from *Geschichte der Serben*, I Band, Gotha, 1911, pp. 115, 116, 120, 152-154.



## THE ILLYRIANS, THE ALBANIANS AND THE SLAVS : PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY AND SYMBIOSIS(\*)

In the 11th century Byzantine writers, while describing the uprisings which had their starting-point in Durres, mention the Albanians (Albanoi, Albanitai), for the first time. At that period they constituted an important part of the army which the rebels Maniakes (1042) and Basiliakes (1078) raised against the emperors of Constantinople. From the ethnic chaos of the Balkans lying under the political shadow of Byzantium, an exceptionally interesting people stand out and enter history. The ethnic basis of this people in the period of Antiquity was a strong factor in history and is known by the name Illyrian. For a certain time the confused events of the Balkan Peninsula brought about that this people disappeared from the eyes of history writers; while unnoticed, it contributed to the development of the languages and folklore of the Balkan nations. And when eventually its name was changed to Albanian, it gave new proofs of its creative power. Like the Basques in the Pyrennees, the Celts in Ireland and Wales, the Tuaregh and the Kabyles in the Atlas, and the remnants of many nations in the Caucasus, the Albanians, protected by mountains, are a magnificent old nation. They have never been petrified feeble relics, but a vigorous national grouping...

...Evidence of the wide extension of the Albanians can be seen in the names of other phratries of Zeta, such as the Mataguzh in Podgorica (1335), the Mahina along the coast (1435), who with their name recall the Illyrian Mauro, and the Malonsiq in the valley of the Zeta River, as well as the Matarug of the recent past. Memory of the phratry of Albanian herdsmen, Gubicet e Medhenj, has been preserved in the name Golla e Madhe (mentioned for the first time in 1444) in the interior of Montenegro, where nobody knows the Albanian language today. In this regard, legends about Albanian and Serbian tribes having common ancestors are characteristic.

For example, the present-day Serbian tribes of Vasojevic, Piper and Ozrihnic and the Albanian tribes of Krasniqi and Hoti, are supposed to have originated from five brothers. Jirecek pointed out that the present-day Montenegrin tribes which are mentioned for the first time in the 14th century (the Zubci at the foot of Mt.Orjan (1305), the Maleshevi in the district of Bilece, the Banjani (1389), the Drobnici in Durmitor (1354), the Bjeloglavi in the Zeta Valley (1348), the Ozrihnic and Njegushi above Kotorr (1435), the Piper in Morača (1416), the Vasojevic of Medun Castle (1444), were created from large villages of herdsmen.

The strongest phratries of the Montenegrin, Kucis, known as Drekalj (Drekalovic), claim their origin from Skanderbeg with the aim of adding to the glory of their "forbears". The fame of this hero spread to the territory of the Southern Slavs, too. Together with him and Leka (Alexander the Great - ed.) another invincible Albanian, Musa Kesexhia, a man with three hearts, presents himself here ...

... The compact masses of Albanians in the vicinity of Ragusa and Kotorr in the 13th century show that there were autochthonous Illyrian remnants isolated from the Albanian nucleus all around these parts ...

... Zeta and Northern Albania comprised a separate biological entity; they were linked with the same continuous territory, the same Illyrian blood, and the same historical sufferings.



... The process of amalgamation between Serbs and Albanians continues to this day. The most typical instance is that of Kuç, the Kuç tribe, which in the 17th century was still Albanian; in 1614 it is said: "Chuzzi Albanesi del reto romano." Today this clan is Serbian.

#### ALBANIA AS A POLITICAL UNIT IN THE MIDDLE AGES(\*)

"... The ethnos of Albanians is the most ancient and most enduring on the Balkan Peninsula. For more than a thousand years it shared the same fate with the Slavs and the Greeks, who have now been completely liberated. In the pre-Turkish period Albania comprised, although not as a stable political unit, a geographical and ethnic entity, alongside the political entities of Bulgaria and Serbia. Regarding Montenegro, from the historical standpoint, this can be treated only as a misshapen child of Albania."

#### NOTES

\* Excerpts from *The Serbs and the Albanians*, Prishtina 1968, pp. 29, 42, 61, 107-108, 141 and 151.

\* Taken from *Die Grenzen Albaniens im Mittelalter*, in "Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen", I Band, Munchen und Leipzig 1916, p. 289.



## CHAPTER 3

# THE ALBANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN KOSOVA

Prof. EMIN PLLANA  
Prishtina - Yugoslavia

### ON THE DEPORTATION OF ALBANIANS FROM THE TERRITORY OF SANDJAK OF NIS OF KOSOVA (1877-1878) (\*)

At the time of the Eastern Crisis (1875-1878) the Albanian Peninsula underwent major social, political, and ethnic changes. In some places, the structure and composition of the population has altered almost completely. The demographic and ethnic changes have had major consequences for the subsequent political and social relations between those peoples.

Under the pretext of "improving" the condition of the Christians who were under the Ottoman domination, on April 24, 1877 Russia entered war with Turkey. The Eastern Crisis reached its most critical phase.

Serbia, Montenegro and Rumania took part in the war against Turkey on the side of Russia. The Serbian army carried out its military operations in the sector of Nis, Pirot, Prokuplje, Leskovc and Vranja, and scored great successes.

The Albanians who were removed from the territory of the Sandjak of Nis, and specifically from the kazas (district) of Nis, Prokuplje, Kurshumli, Leskovc, and Vranja, settled in Kosova, Macedonia and other places. A few Turks and Tcherkesses, who were there, were deported together with the Albanians.

The districts of the Sandjak of Nis, Jabllanica, Kosaonica, Toplica, Pusta Reka, Veternica, Polanica, Medvegja, and some others, including the towns of Nis, Prokuplje, Kurshumli, Leskovc and Vranja, have had Albanians amongst their inhabitants. In the kazas of Prokuplje and Kurshumli, the Albanians have dominated.

Under the Ottoman rule, the relations between the Albanians, Serbs, Jews, Tcherkesses, Turks and others were good. The descendants of Albanian refugees relate from what they have heard from their parents that there were no religious, economic or political quarrels among them. They say that they visited and assisted one another. About the good relations between the Albanians, the Serbs and other peoples, Branislav Nusic writes: "Neither the Tcherkesses nor the Albanians deported from Serbia feel themselves at home in Kosova; all the refugees lament for their old lands..."(1) It is true that even though they have settled in Kosova, the refugees have always wanted and hoped to go back to their own lands. This could be seen in their complaints and petitions sent to the Congress of Great Powers in Berlin, in which they ask to be returned to their former native places.

About the number of Albanians who lived in the territory of the sandjak of Nis, specifically in the kazas of Nis, Pirot, Vranja, Kurshumli, Leskovc and Prokuplje, various records and statistics exist. The statistics, which the Turkish administration has left, are inaccurate, because the population is divided on the basis of religion into Moslems and



Christians. The records of the Serbian administration and Bulgaria are frequently biased and not objective.

On the basis of the available records, which are contradictory, it can be seen that the number of Albanians who lived in the Sandjak of Nis was considerable.

According to some statistical records of Serbia, in the centres of the kazas of the Sandjak of Nis the number of households was : in Nis 3 500 households of Christians, 2 000 households of Turkish and Albanian Moslems; in the kaza of Nis the villages inhabited by Albanians were : Breznica, Trnava, Pasjaca, Cifluk, Mesgraja, Trupalle, etc. Pirot had 3 000 Christian households and 1 800 Turkish and Albanian households. Leskovc 2 500 Christian households and 1 000 Turkish and Albanian households. In Prokuplje there were 140 Christian households and 656 Turkish and Albanian households; in Tren 300 Christian households and 15 Turkish households, while Kurshumli was virtually an Albanian township with 150 Albanian households. (2)

According to another record, until the year 1877 Leskovc is reported to have had 5 000 Moslem inhabitants in 900 households. According to the census of 1873 in the *kaza* of Leskovc, there were 2 500 Serb - Orthodox households and 1 000 Moslem households. (3)

In the statistical records of the Serbian government and some historiographers who have written on this question, (4) no distinction is made between Turks, Tcherkesses and Albanians. On the basis of their religious beliefs, the Albanians were considered Turks and subjects of the Ottoman Empire. It is well-known that the Albanians have had nothing in common with the Turks and, like the Serbs and others, were enslaved and exploited by the Ottoman state. Indeed, the Albanians were in a more difficult position, because they did not have the right of education in their mother tongue. The number of Turkish emigrants from Anatolia to the Balkans was small. In this region, Turks lived in the towns of Nis, Pirot, Leskovc, Prokuplje and Vranja, mostly officials, officers and soldiers, while the number of permanent Turkish residents was small. In the villages there were no Turks; therefore most of the inhabitants listed as *Moslems* were Albanians, with very few Turks and Tcherkesses. Evidence of this is the fact that the language spoken in Nis and Pirot was a mixed Turkish-Albanian, while in Vranja, Leskovac, Prokuplje and Kurshumli only Albanian was spoken. (5) Some early historiographers, and even some recent ones, consider the Albanians in this territory as Turkish subjects (*turski podanici*), and try to give them a privileged position in the Ottoman Empire, which is a great mistake.

On the eve of *liberation* (from Ottoman rule-ed). Toplica had 18 333 inhabitants, of whom the district of Prokuplje had 10 825, comprising 4 618 Serbs and 6 207 Turks and Albanians; the district of Kosonica had 6 708 inhabitants, comprising 575 Serbs and 5 951 Turks and Albanians and about 800 Tcherkesses. (6) The compiler of these records also identifies the Albanians with the Turks.

According to the statistics of the Serbian administration, dated Feb.1, 1878, in the district of Prokuplje there were 51 villages with Serbian population, 22 villages with mixed population, with 858 Serbian households and 882 Albanian households, 74 villages with Albanian population, with 1 538 households, while for 14 villages no figures were recorded, because nobody was found in them when the census was taken. According to later records, these 14 villages had 245 Albanian households, which means that there were 1 783 Albanian households altogether.

In the *kaza* of Prokuplje there were also 325 Tcherkesse households. (7) According to these statistical records, 51 villages in the environs of Prokuplje had Serbian population, but judging from the surnames of the residents it emerges that there were Albanians in these 51 villages, too, the Brezinci refugees from Breznica, the Devci from the villages of Upper and Lower Devca, the Kostanici from Kostanica, the Lepajs from Lepaj, the Pojati from Pojat, the Recici from Recica and so on. These villages are described as inhabited solely by Serbian populations. (8)



According to Jovan Hadzivasiljevic, in Prokuplje and its environs, there were 2 505 Albanian households, 2 031 Serbian households and 24 Turkish households. In Kurshumli there were 1 956 Albanian households, 638 Serbian households, and 60 gipsy households. (9)

From the reports of the diplomatic representatives of the big powers, Austria-Hungary, Britain, France and Germany, and other states, it can be seen that in the *kazas* of Nis, Prokuplje, Leskovac, Vranja, and Kurshumli, the number of Albanians was larger than that reported in the statistical sources of Serbia and Bulgaria.

In the sandjak of Nis, Carl Sax found in the *kaza* of Leskovac 24 000 Albanians and 22 500 Serbs, in the *kaza* of Kurshumli 19 000 Albanians and 500 Serbs, in the *kaza* of Prokuplje 15 000 Albanians and 1 500 Serbs, and in the *kaza* of Vranja 25 00 Albanians and 60 500 Serbs. (10) Dr. Aristides Roukis points out that the *kaza* of Vranja had 23 500 Albanians and 60 500 Serbs. (11)

With the entry of the Serbian army in the region of the *kazas* of Nis, Prokuplje, Kurshumli, Leskovac and Vranja, at the end of 1877 and the beginning of 1878, the Albanians began to be deported *en masse* from these places and they went in the direction of Kosova, to Macedonia and other places. Their deportation continued even after the peace of San Stefano, up to the time of the Congress of Berlin and later.

The expansion of Serbia to the southeast ... found the support of the monarchy of the Danube, because the latter urged it to spread southeast, in the direction of Eastern Macedonia and Bulgaria, in place of the territory which Russia agreed to give over to Serbia under the peace of San Stefano. Austria-Hungary considered the Vilayet of Kosova as its own occupation zone. In order to strengthen its position in the Vilayet of Kosova, it was for ethnic changes: for the removal of the Albanian population from the liberated territory of the Sandjak of Nis, on the one hand, and for the removal of the Serbian population from the Vilayet of Kosova, on the other hand. Prince Milan had the approval of the monarchy and a free hand to drive the Albanians by force from the region of the Sandjak of Nis. (12)

From a number of sources and the reports of diplomatic representatives of the big states and of Serbia, it emerges that the main blame for the expulsion of the Albanians falls on Prince Milan and Austria-Hungary. (13) Prince Milan and the official circles wanted to make Serbia a state of a purely Serbian population, because they feared intervention from the Great Powers and a possibility of the return of these regions to Turkish rule. On the other hand, the Austro-Hungarian diplomacy urged Prince Milan to forcibly deport the Albanians to create a basis for antagonism between the Albanians and Serbs, which would eliminate the possibility of political rapprochement between them in the future. It feared the claims of Serbia to the Vilayet of Kosova, which it considered as a zone of its sphere of influence.

The number of Albanians displaced from these territories in various sources is contradictory. R.L. Pavlovic points out that from 81 villages with Albanian population (there are no records of 16 villages), 1 867 households were deported. (14) According to Jovan Cvijic, about 30 000 persons were deported. (15)

Some other sources give a much greater figure for the number of Albanian deportees. From the sources and statistical data of the Serbian government, it emerges that their number has been much greater. Kurshumli and its environs had 1 956 Albanian households, the *kaza* of Prokuplje 2 504 Albanian households, and Pusta Reka 1 539 Albanian households. (16) The town of Leskovac had 1 000 Turkish and Albanian households, Nis 2 000 Turkish and Albanian households, and Vranja 25 000 Albanians. Obviously, in the *kazas* mentioned above there were about 10 000 Albanian households, all of which were deported. The British consul Blunt, in his report to the Marquis of Salisbury on May 10, 1880, from Salonica, to which he attaches the report by Mr Alvarez, speaks about the position and the number of the refugees who had settled in the Vilayet of Kosova. Blunt writes: ... "I availed myself of my recent stay at Prishtina and Uskub to obtain information as to the general state of affairs in that province. In my first



interview with the Vali of Kosova, his Excellency... referring to the muhajers, or Moslem refugees, from Kurshumli, Prokuplje, and other places situated in the territory recently acquired by Servia in virtue of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, stated that at present they constituted the chief difficulty with which he had to deal. Their number, which he estimated at from 90 000 to 100 000, and insubordinate disposition gave him great uneasiness and rendered the task of keeping them in order extremely difficult." (Public Record Office, London, F.O. 195/1323; The British Museum, London, Accounts and Papers (43). 1880. LXXXII. 82,77-78). (17) In another report, he writes that Macedonia was one of the regions in which many emigrants had gathered in 1877-1878. Part of the Turkish population (this refers to the Moslem population), indeed the majority of them, after the regions of Nis and Leskovc fell under Serbian occupation, were rounded up and deported to the Vilayets of Kosova and Salonica. In the winter of 1877-1878, the number of emigrants in these vilayets was about 300 000. During 1878, some of the emigrants from Salonica were sent to Anatolia and Syria. The number of emigrants was further increased when, under the provisions of the Congress of Berlin, some territories were ceded to Montenegro, too.

All the Albanians were forced to leave the territories of the Sandjak of Nis, apart from a few remaining villages in the region of Jabllanica. Albanians were left in the area around Presheva and Bujanovc, also, because after the Congress of Berlin they remained under Ottoman rule.

Their deportation has been on a mass scale and accompanied with a terrible panic. When the Serbian army entered Pirot, the new state found a total of 2 270 households with 6 330 Christian and Moslem inhabitants. When the census was taken later, there were 1 943 households, of which only 159 households with 638 inhabitants were Turkish and Albanian. (18)

When the Serbian army entered the territory, at the end of 1877 and the beginning of 1878, it found many settlements, villages and whole districts deserted. (19) After its entry, the military government found a population of mixed composition and structure, but from the time of the first unsuccessful war in 1876, ethnic changes began, and, during the second was of 1877-1878, the ethnic situation and structure of the population was mainly altered.

According to the census of March 22, 1879, in the regions of Nis, Pirot, Vranja and Toplica only 6 567 Moslems had remained. (20) In the subsequent census, in 1884, the non-Serbian population left in the districts was 6.85 per cent in Vranja and 1.43 per cent in villages; 5.45 per cent in Nis, and 0.64 per cent in villages; 3.64 per cent in Pirot and 0.43 per cent in villages; and 5.45 per cent in Toplica and 3.85 per cent in villages. (21)

In connection with the deportation of Albanians from the territories of the Sandjak of Nis, Joseph H. Kostic, a teacher at Leskovac, writes: "There were many Turks (\*) who halfnaked and barefoot, in the greatest winter of December, ran away through the snow abandoning their homes full of possessions. That night many infants, in waggons, or in cradles carried by their mothers, died from the bitter cold. Turkish families left and dragged themselves through the terrible cold to the valley of south Morava River. Bodies of dead children and old people frozen to death could be seen beside the road, through the gorge of Gudelica to Vranja and Kumanova. Their retreat was tragic. The horses and dogs dragged the waggons slowly through the snow, because there were few sledges." (22) In another report he says: "From our soldiers who pursued the Turks after their defeat at Gudelica, Pirot and Vranja, I have heard that they came across groups of fugitives, in an even more pitiful situation. Even what possessions they had taken with them they had discarded along the way, in order to flee and escape more easily. Along the road were found many animals which had died of cold. A number of children lying lost or half-dead from fatigue and hunger had their bellies swollen like drums. (23)

In speech he delivered in Nis, on Jan. 6, 1878, Prince Milan told the population of the liberated regions that the Serbian government guarantees full equality to all faiths and



nationalities in this territory and guarantees them the rights of property, cultural development and religions. (24) This promise came much too late, because the majority of the Albanians had been deported. In his speech Prince Milan tried to avoid the blame or responsibility for the deportation of Albanians.

The report Mr. Gould sent to the Marquis of Salisbury from Belgrade on November 26, 1878, says: "I hear that the Serbian Government has behaved with great and unnecessary harshness, not to say cruelty, towards the Albanians of the recently ceded districts. If my information is correct, and I have every reason to believe it to be so, the peaceful and industrious inhabitants of over 100 Albanian villages in the Toplitza and Vranja valleys were ruthlessly driven from their homesteads by the Servians in the early part of the year. These wretched people have ever since been wandering about in a starving condition in the wild country beyond the new Servian frontier. They have not been allowed to gather in their crops on their own lands, which were reaped by the Servian soldiery, although repeatedly they have sent deputations and addressed numerous petitions to the Servian government, humbly offering their submission and promising to become loyal subjects of Prince Milan. Every time they sought to recross the Servian line of outposts, they were shot down, and in some instances out of sheer desperation they have had recourse to retaliatory measures, which have cost the Servian rather dear. When I last had the pleasure of meeting M. Ristic, I casually stated to his Excellency that these facts had come to my knowledge, and that should they be confirmed, I felt certain her Majesty's Government and the majority of the Great Powers would call the Servian Government to account, and insist upon strict justice being done to these unfortunate people, whose only crime was belonging to an alien race and another creed..." (25)

The Albanian refugees, who were driven out from the Sandjak of Nis, settled in the Vilayet of Kosova, most of them in the Sandjak of Prishtina and the *kazas* of Mitrovica, Vuçiterna, Ferizaj, Prishtina and Gjilan. A few went to the Dukagjin Plateau. A considerable number settled in Macedonia, around Kumanova, Shkup, Titoveles and Koçana. Turks and more Albanians of Surdulica from Vranja and its environs, from Leskovc and around it, and other places, went to the territory of Macedonia. "In Edrene and Gymyldje there are about 200 000 immigrants. In the autumn of 1879 there were still about 200 000 immigrants in Macedonia. These immigrants had no possibilities either to live in Macedonia or to return to their homes. In the winter months, the situation of the immigrants became a serious problem..." (26)

Most of the Albanian refugees in Kosova, who had settled in the villages of Tcherkesses, were deported to Turkey, on barren and untitled lands as sharecroppers. Right from the outset their economic and social position was very difficult. The descendants of various states, especially those of Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria-Hungary, Britain and France, speak about their deplorable position. The most eloquent testimony is found in their letters and petitions to the Great Powers, the Congress of Berlin and foreign diplomats, in which, among other things, they seek aid. The Albanian population; which had long inhabited the *kazas* of Nis, Leskovc, Prokuplje, Kurshumli and Vranja, was in extreme hardships because, they had left all their livestock and possessions behind.

The League of Prizren took up the question of refugees, which, in point six of the first decisions of Karanname, sternly criticizes the Serbian Government and the Great Powers for the expulsion of Albanians from the territory of the Sandjak of Nis. The League of Prizren expresses its readiness to undertake military measures against such an act.

The Albanian emigrants outside the homeland also raised the question of the Albanian refugees. They sent the Congress of Berlin many notes and telegrams in which they demanded that measures be taken immediately and that the rulers, who had exerted pressure on the Albanian population to leave their homes be put on trial.

The letter of the patriotic association of Istanbul, signed by Omer Vrioni and Pashko Vasa, says: "An ancient people with traditions and desires to live in peace with its neighbours,



suddenly found itself facing problems of its national existence. After the recent partitioning, it is threatened by unprecedented massacres and pressure." (27) In this four-page letter, the Albanians of Istanbul make clear to Bismarck and Europe that if they continued to violate the interests of small nations for their own advantage, then they would give rise to new problems and cause troubles to themselves first of all. (28) Subsequent events showed that the Congress /of Berlin/ and its organs encountered great difficulties in applying their decisions because of their failure to take proper account of these issues.



## NOTES

- \* Abridged from the review *Gjurmime Albanologjike* (Albanological Investigations), series of Historical Sciences, no.9, 1979, Prishtina 1980.
- 1 B.Nusic, *Kosovo II*, p. 74.
  - 2 V.Nikolic-Stojancevic, *Leskovac i oslobodeni predeli*, p.12.
  - 3 *Leskovacki zbornik*, Leskovac 1978, p. 143.
  - 4 V. Nikolic-Stojancevic does not distinguish the Turks from the Albanians, but considers them subjects of the Ottoman Empire. She considers the Albanians a privileged people under the Turkish rule. (See V.N.Stojancevic, *Leskovac i oslobodeni predeli Srbije 1877-1878 godine*, Leskovac 1975).
  - 5 V.Nikolic-Stojancevic, *Leskovac i oslobodeni predeli*, p.12.
  - 6 N.R.Ilic, *Oslobodenije Juzne Srbije, 1877-1878*, Belgrade 1977, p.232.
  - 7 *Arhiv SR Srbije POP-K-64-392*.
  - 8 V.Nikolic-Stojancevic, *Leskovac i oslobodeni predeli*, table 1.
  - 9 J.Hadzivasiljevic, *Arnautska Liga*, p.16.
  - 10 C.Sax, *K.und K.Osterreich-Ungarn. Consul in Adrianopol, Etnographische Karte der Europaischen Turkei*, Wien 1878, p.10.
  - 11 Dr.A.Roukis, *Etnographische und statistische Mitteilungen uber Albanien* (Dr.A.Potermans, *Mitteilungen aus Justus Perthes Geographischer Anstalt*. Herausgegeben von D.E.Beh und von Prof. Dr. A.Supan; 30 t. 1834. Gotna Justus Betheas, pp. 367-369).
  - 12 V.Stojancevic, *Kosova and Metohija under the Ottoman rule, 1878-1913*, "Perparimi", Prishtina 1956, no.5, p.304.
  - 13 The Albanian refugees and the native-born inhabitants of Kosova used ... this expression from newcomers from Toplica, which is a mistake. The refugees came from the territories of the Sandjak of Nis, from the *kazas* of Prokuplje, Nis, Kurshumli, Vranja, and Leskovac. The region has a narrower meaning than the territory of the *kazas* mentioned.
  - 14 R.L.Pavlovic, *Seoba srba i arbanasa u ratovima 1875, 1877-1878*, GEI IV-VI, Belgrade, p.53.
  - 15 J.Cvijic, *Osnovi za geografiju*, p. 1166.
  - 16 J.Hadzivasiljevic, *Arnautska Liga*, p.15.
  - 17 S.Rizaj, *Lidhja Shqiptare e Prizrenit ne dokumentet angleze*, (The Albanian League of Prizren in British Sources), Archive of Kosova, Prishtina 1978, pp. 144-146.
  - 18 V.Nikolic-Stojancevic, *Leskovac i oslobodeni predeli Srbije*, p. 159.
  - 19 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
  - 20 V.Nikolic-Stojancevic, *Leskovac i ...*, table 1.
  - 21 *Ibid.*, p.79.
  - \* J.H.Kostic means their religion, not their nationality which was Albanian (ed.'s note).
  - 22 J.H.Kostic, *Oslobodjenje grada Leskovac*, Leskovac 1907, dt. 1-15.
  - 23 S.L.Popovic, *Puteranje po Novoj Srbiji*, Belgrade 1950, p.345.
  - 24 *Arhiv SRS*. Po. K-6/44 Srpske novine no. 5-6 January 1878, from Prince Milan's speech at Nis.
  - 25 S.Rizaj, *Lidhja Shqiptare e Prizrenit ne dokumentet angleze*. Arkivi i Kosoves, Prishtina 1978, pp. 144-146.
  - 26 B.N.Sismir, *Rumeliden turk gocleri Belgeler dokument*, Ankara 1970, p.301.
  - 27 I.Buxhovi, *Rilindja*, June 3, 1978.
  - 28 *Ibidem*.



## THE ALBANIAN LEAGUE OF PRIZREN AND ITS STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND LIBERATION (\*)

The inter-action of three fundamental factors gave rise to the Albanian League of Prizren of 1878-1881. They are the anti-Ottoman popular movements of the Tanzimat period (1840-1870), the new ideology of the Albanian Renaissance, which had begun to capture the minds and hearts of the more progressive Albanian intelligentsia, and the Eastern Crisis of the seventies which put on the agenda again, but now with special force, the question of the future of the Albanian nation, the integrity of its territory and its liberation from centuries-long Ottoman bondage. These factors account for the specific features of the Albanian national movement of 1878-1881 and explain its powerful and widespread impact on the life of the country before. This inter-action marked the beginning of a higher phase in the Albanian national movement and gave the League a qualitatively new physiognomy.

The ground for the League of Prizren was prepared by the great anti-Ottoman popular uprisings against the Tanzimat "reforms" which did not recognize the Albanians as a separate nation, but, on the contrary, denied them the right to schooling and writing in their mother tongue and further aggravated their national and economic oppression.

In the heat of this popular struggle, the Albanians felt intense hatred for the new corrupt, and bureaucratic administration of the Ottoman Empire and wanted to break away from the rule of the Sublime Porte and to be governed by their own people.

This struggle gave the insurgents an idea of the necessity for a union of the Albanians and a unification of all their regions. Thus, Albanians tried to successfully resist a more powerful enemy and to emerge as a separate entity with common demands. With this objective in mind, they organized the assemblies of the inter-regional "Leagues" and attempted creating pan-Albanian Leagues.

This aspiration for the union of the Albanians and their territories as a separate entity within the Ottoman Empire had proceeded from economic and national considerations, but it had not yet become a clear and comprehensive program for their political unification.

The experience of the liberation struggle in the years 1830 to 1870 brought forth the ideology of a national movement. Since the Albanian nation constituted a territorial, linguistic, spiritual and historical community, the first ideologists of the Albanian Renaissance tried to direct the fighting energies of the Albanian people on to a new course: schooling in the Albanian language (N.Veqilharxhi), a national unity above regional and religious distinctions (Th.Mitko), and economic and social reforms (Z.Jubani). However, these ideas had not yet been blended with the liberation movements.

The blending of national ideas with the anti-Ottoman popular movements brought them out of their old parochial limitations and placed them on sound foundations. It opened a clear prospect by giving them a national political programme. Because of the country's economic and social backwardness, this was a long, difficult and complicated process. But new political events intervened and changed the people's consciousness; they impelled the Renaissance men to unite closely with the masses and act together with them, thereby greatly accelerating this trend. These strong internal and external events were the Eastern Crisis.

Although the "Sick man of Bosphorus", as the Ottoman Empire was called at that time, had suffered heavy blows from the liberation movements of oppressed peoples, it was still alive and sought to prolong its domination in the Balkans. However, the Western Great Powers did



not allow it to give up the ghost. Because of their own imperialist interests, and their contradictions among themselves, they had found in the formula of "balance of power" and the policy of safeguarding the territorial integrity of Turkey a way to establish their complete economic and political control over it and plunder it systematically. Tzarist Russia pursued another course, that of war, to bring about the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to seize its territories and to establish its hegemony on the pretext of defending the interests of the Slav and Christian population on the Balkan Peninsula.

The Balkan monarchies, supported by Russia, operated within this framework. The Balkan bourgeoisie had long abandoned the liberation and democratic ideals which inspired the national revolutions there and, as early as the forties of the 19th century, drafted plans for a chauvinist and expansionist policy which went beyond the bounds of their national unity and was intended to create big states at the expense of the Albanian and other oppressed peoples. Such a policy was bound to adapt itself in one way or another to imperialist interests.

The movements of oppressed peoples clashed with this constellation of contradictory forces and interests and produced the Eastern Crisis of the seventies. The Albanian uprisings were active components of the movements of the Balkan peoples against their common enemy. Objectively, the possibilities existed for a united anti-Ottoman front and the struggle for it would have speeded up the liberation and national unification of the Balkan peoples. But this did not occur. The War of Montenegro and Serbia against Turkey in July 1876, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, and the involvement of other Great Powers in the Eastern question directed the crisis towards the expansionist aims of the bourgeois states and against the interests of the Albanian people.

The military operations of Serbia and Montenegro in Albanian territories, along with the official declarations of the respective governments, showed that the time had come for those states to carry out, by the force of arms, their plans for their own national liberation and unification and for the partitioning of Albania. When tens of thousands of Albanians were forcibly expelled from their homes, this danger became imminent and tangible. Blinded by national and religious hatred for the Albanians, the Serbian and Montenegrin armies implemented with fanaticism the order of the Serbian prince Milan who said: "The more Albanians you drive out the greater your merits to the homeland."

In this explosive situation, Albanians came to know the provisions of the Russo-Turkish Treaty of San Stefano. Under this treaty, entire Albanian regions were to be ceded to the Slav states of the Balkans: Gucia, Plava, Vermosh, Kelmend, Kraja, Anamal, Hot, Gruda, Tivar and Ulqin to Montenegro; part of the Sandjak of Prishtina up to the vicinity of Gjilan and Mitrovica to Serbia; Kumanova, Kaçanik, Tetova, Kerçova, Gostivar, Dibra, Struga, Pogradec, Korça to Bulgaria. Hence, not just isolated border zones but a large part of Albanian territories was threatened. Only a small step remained to be taken for the complete partitioning of Albanian territories.

This treaty convinced the Albanians that it was a question of life or death for them and the existence or disappearance of their nation from the map. Powerful demonstrations and protests burst out all over the country and people began to mobilize themselves spontaneously for self-defence.

The new situation, truly, gave a powerful impulse to the Albanian national movement, but it also complicated its tasks. Apart from the Ottoman Empire, which remained the age-long enemy, the Albanian people had to face new and powerful enemies on the battle-field. The struggle on two fronts presented new political and organizational responsibilities and the need for a political strategy and tactics on account of the new ratio of forces. They would have to manoeuvre in the labyrinth of contradictory interests of the Eastern Crisis.

This required, first of all, the taking of an essential step which had not been taken previously: a leading national forum had to be created to conduct the necessary political



activities inside and outside the country. For this purpose the enlightened Albanians formed a "Central Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Albanian Nationality" in Istanbul in 1887; among these personalities were Abdyl Frasheri, Pashko Vasa, Sami Frasheri, Jani Vreto and Zija Prishtina. Its memorandum to the Great Powers announced the aspirations of the Albanian nation and its demands for the recognition, integrity and unification of its territories in a single autonomous administrative unit.

The struggle on two fronts against numerous enemies presented the Committee with the problem of finding allies in its struggle for national unity and liberation. Greece was the only neighbouring Balkan state which was not officially at war with Turkey, was outside the Russian sphere of influence, and was threatened by the expansion of the Slav bourgeois states. However, the talks of the Committee with a Greek representative continued with interruptions for several months (July-December 1877) and had no success. The established Greek policy of the "great idea" came up against the Albanian desire to have reliable support from the south and armed assistance from the government in Athens in its war of liberation and also to allow Greece to liberate its territories under Ottoman rule. The landing in February 1878 of Greek irregulars on the Albanian territories near Saranda dashed all hopes of an Albanian-Greek alliance.

The calls for collaboration could not find a positive response when the Great Powers and the reactionary monarchies determined the policy in the Balkans.

Albanians could find support in the struggle for achieving their national programme only among their own militant patriotic forces. The centre of gravity of the movement shifted within Albania. The country had to organize its popular forces, create a single national leadership, produce local units, and have a unified framework to co-ordinate the political, military and administrative activities and to represent the will of the Albanian nation in the international arena. To this end, on June 10, 1878, the representatives from different strata and regions of the Homeland formed the Albanian League in Prizren. The speed with which this organization was set up, the dense network of regional committees over the whole territory, and the voluntary military groups placing themselves at the disposal of the League, all this came about because Albanians were ready to act. People's support during the Eastern Crisis made the League a dynamic and efficient entity.

The national and socio-economic interests of the broad popular masses merged in this movement with those of the Albanian bourgeoisie and landowners who were worried about the partitioning plans and the inability of the Ottoman Empire to defend the threatened territories and its anti-Albanian policy. This broad patriotic front, which rose above class, religious and regional distinctions, had its strong and weak aspects.

The active participation of the popular masses and the progressive elements of the local bourgeoisie and landowners gave this front a force and vitality to carry out its liberation and democratic programme. However, the League also included Turkophile landowners and clerics who embraced the national platform only for the moment and to the extent that it coincided with the protection of the Albanian territories from partitioning, that is, protecting the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Their mentality and centuries-old connection with Turkey made them a profoundly conservative factor in the struggle for the country's autonomous and democratic growth.

The formation of the League also encouraged further development of Albanian political thinking. It did not remain simply a staff of operations. The Istanbul Committee that created the League to lead the movement within the country had it under its constant supervision. Through the stormy turn in events, becoming more and more blended with the patriotic masses, in conflict with internal and external enemies, the Albanian League gained an indisputable authority in the country. It was an independent political and military organization with its roots deep in the mother soil. The people called it simply *milet*, that is, "nation", expressing its



character in this word. In the heat of the war and in people's assemblies, it enriched its political programme and made it known to the outside world through its many decisions and memoranda addressed to the Great Powers and Turkey. In the name of the Albanian nation, it presented three demands: a) Recognition of the Albanian nation as one and indivisible and application of the principle of nationality; b) safeguarding the inviolability and integrity of the Albanian territories; and c) unifying the lands of Albania in a single unit with an Albanian administration, Albanian language, and a capital city.

The Congress of Berlin, which had gathered to revise the Treaty of San Stefano in favour of the Western Great Powers, denied the existence of the Albanian nation and the Albanian national question and decided to partition parts of the Albanian territory in favour of the neighbouring states. For its part, the Ottoman Empire, defeated in the war and facing the pressure of the Great Powers bent on plunder, could not defend its own territorial integrity or prevent the partitioning of the territories of Albania. Moreover, it fanatically pursued a rapid anti-Albanian policy, refusing to grant Albanians even the most elementary rights.

Under these conditions, the League took the fate of the nation in its own hands by declaring that nobody had the right to seize territories inhabited by Albanian and make them tokens for barter and that the Albanian people were the sole owners of these territories.

The problem of the recognition of the Albanian nation, its territorial integrity, and its struggle for self-defence occupied the League's political thinking and its activity. The examination of the acts of the League shows that it focused its attention on the place of the territory in its concept of the Albanian nation and its practical solution.

For the League and the men of the Renaissance, the national territory was an essential component of the Albanian nation. The ideas formulated by the first men of the Albanian Renaissance, N. Veqilharxhi, Th. Mitko and Zef Jubani, about the Albanian nation evolved further under the League of Prizren in the writings of S. Frasheri, P. Vasa, J. Vreto and others, when the question of its recognition and its rights figured on the agenda.

The national identity of the lands inhabited by Albanians was based on historical and current factors. The three elements were its historical character, the majority of its inhabitants speaking the same language, and the cohesiveness of this group.

In determining the historical character of Albanian territories, the League rightly argued that the Albanians are the descendants of the Illyrians. They are natives in their territories, hence their incontestable owners. This argument refuted the theories and unrestrained anti-Albanian propaganda of chauvinist circles of the neighbouring states who either denied the Albanian nationality of the population of the southern regions or considered the northeastern regions of Albania as having been recently occupied by Albanian tribes.

The League supported its position with two other arguments. The Albanians in these territories make up the biggest section and are a compact population. The League's figures given for the Albanian population are confirmed by other sources and place its number in their historical territories at about 2 million. (1)

While proving the national identity of the territories inhabited by the Albanians, the League also formulated a practical solution. The boundaries of these territories, it said, included the four existing Vilayets of Shkodra, Kosova, Manastir and Janina.

In these vilayets, alongside the Albanians, who comprised the majority, there were also other populations. The League's demand to include the four vilayets in its future Albania proceeded from the Balkan practice in determining the national territories; it took as a basis the biggest Turkish administrative division : the vilayet.

Since non-Albanian people lived in the peripheral zones of these vilayets, the League demanded that the majority in a territory should be the decisive criterion in deciding to which the latter belonged, while guaranteeing the rights of minorities by international norms. It rejected the criterion proposed by the diplomats of the neighbouring monarchies and the Great



Powers, according to which the Albanian territories had to be transferred to the neighbouring states because these had their national minorities there. The fact that in some instances the League fought to prevent the ceding of some territory with an alien population in a vilayet with an Albanian majority can be explained, as its acts show, with economic and especially political-strategic considerations of defence and the expansionist aims of the neighbouring states to partition the Albanian territories. Nevertheless, this did not block the way to a further adjustment of borders through bilateral negotiations provided the integrity and inviolability of Albanian territories was guaranteed, as Abdyl Frasheri stated explicitly in the Albanian-Greek talks in 1877. Although supported by some influential circle and expressed in some acts of the League as a concession to the chauvinist nationalism of the feudal lords, this trend to push the boundaries of the Albanian territories beyond these limits did not become the general line of the League.

Proclaiming the Albanian territories as an inviolable component of the nation, the League attempted with rifle and pen to defend them from the plots of neighbouring states supported by the Great Powers to partition them. Such a legitimate course reflected a correct understanding of the Albanian reality of the time. In the second half of the 19th century, the Albanian nation had consolidated itself as a territorial, linguistic, economic, and spiritual community. It is a merit of the League of Prizren that it considered the infringement of such an important component of a nation and its territory as a grave violation of its rights to existence. Therefore, it is erroneous to claim that only some landowners whose property was affected or some outlying tribes were interested in the struggle for territorial integrity.

The Sublime Porte, too, wanted to preserve the integrity of these Albanian territories in the Ottoman Empire. Powerless to withstand the pressure of the Great Powers and bound by its international treaties, it strove to use the Albanians for its own ends. The Sublime Porte at first agreed to supply arms to the volunteer military units of the League while trying to activate the Turkophile landowner and clerical elements so as to give the movement a pan-Islamic character to keep it under its control.

Taking a one-sided view only of the common interests of the League and the Sublime Porte in preventing the ceding of Albanian lands to neighbouring states, various writers have described the League of Prizren as a tool of Turkey and its movement as a succession of fanatical Moslem mobs. As a result, the patriotic struggle of the people, led by the League, in the years 1878-1881 has been completely distorted, often with deliberate anti-Albanian aims. In fact, through its struggle for the integrity of the Albanian territories, the League formally deprived the Sublime Porte and the Sultan of the right of disposing of these territories; it demanded their return to their true owners, the Albanian people.

The Albanian League opposed with every means the unjust decisions of the Congress of Berlin which had given Albanian lands to Montenegro and Greece and recognized Serbia's right to keep the lands it had occupied. The armed groups of the League defended Plava and Gucia, Hot and Gruda defeating the Montenegrin armies. With equal success, the League defended the Albanian lands in the south, which the Congress of Berlin had recommended to be given to Greece. This brought about that the border problem there remained unsolved until it was eventually decided that there should be no ceding of Albanian lands.

When, after suffering two setbacks, the Great Powers decided that the Albanian town of Ulqin should be given to Montenegro and dispatched their fleet to break Albanian resistance, the League did not hesitate to battle again with the combined forces of Montenegro, Turkey and the Great Powers.

The other fundamental demand of the League was the unification of Albanian territories in a single autonomous administrative unit. It figured in all the documents of our Renaissance up till 1912 and did not stem simply from an ethnic consideration.

By dividing the Albanian territory into four vilayets, the Sublime Porte tried to fragment



it administratively. This was to avert the danger which might come from its unification and, when the need arose, to provoke conflicts between different ethnic elements within one or between different vilayets. Its best proof is the fact that, during the years of the League of Prizren, the Sublime Porte made administrative changes to the Albanian vilayets, to more easily overcome the Albanian resistance, especially in the Vilayet of Kosova, which was a prominent centre of the movement.

The administrative unification of all these territories in a single vilayet, province or state, was the first central condition for national unity. Speaking of the economic basis of national movements, V.I.Lenin pointed out that, "For the complete triumph of the commodity production, the capture of the market by the bourgeoisie is essential, and the unification of territories of a population which speaks the same language is essential." Hence, unification was also an objective requirement for the country's economic and social growth and for the establishment of close economic links through the formation of a common national market. To neutralize the ever-mounting popular resistance it was facing, the Sublime Porte even drafted a plan to meet just one demand of the League by creating a vilayet of Rumelia which would include the Albanian lands. However, it dared not put it into practice and quickly abandoned it.

A component part of the demand for an Albanian state or vilayet was the definition of its relations with the Sublime Porte and the Sultan. The problem is one of great import. Its correct and objective study refutes all the distortions found in some foreign documents and the historiography based on them; their authors were either biased against the Albanian people and did not believe in their national awakening or had a political interest in concealing the truth.

All the documents of the League, the Ottoman Empire and some of the Great Powers show the aim, sometimes secret and sometimes revealed by the League, to alter relations with Istanbul, to gain the country's autonomy or independence, without abandoning its defence. Moreover, for the League, autonomy was an essential condition for successfully waging the war to defend territorial integrity and achieve national unification.

Within the League there were two trends, that of autonomy and that of independence. Its most enlightened and progressive leaders, such as Abdyl Frasheri, Sami Frasheri and others, regarded the complete secession of Albania from Turkey as a goal which could and must be realized immediately under favourable conditions. The Committee of Istanbul had expressed this idea in 1877, during its talks with the representative of the Athens Government about an Albanian-Greek alliance. Although these talks failed, the idea of independence was prominent in the memorandum of June 13, 1878, addressed to the British prime minister, Lord Beaconsfield, and it remained on the agenda after the formation of the League of Prizren. A representative of the League declared to the Russian general, E.Totleben, "The Albanians want nothing other than what has been done for the other peoples of the Balkan Peninsula : recognition of their independence and the right to create an independent principality." The complete secession from Turkey would be achieved "after the work was done", as Sami Frasheri put it in a letter to De Rada, in February 1881. Sami Frasheri's conviction for the possibility of "complete secession" of Albania from Turkey was so profound that he even contemplated the way an independent democratic Albanian state would be organized. However, while this idea remained could not be announced until certain optimal conditions had been fulfilled, the territorial autonomy of the united Albanian province was the League's official demand expressed in virtually all its documents, as a stage of transition to full independence.

The League's demand of the national autonomy of Albania under the sovereignty or suzerainty of Turkey remained unchanged throughout the period of the National Renaissance up to the eve of the proclamation of Independence; it was conditioned by several internal and external factors.

The movement of the years 1878-1881 agitated for national liberation and unification; it was a patriotic movement interested in including all the social classes and strata. The League



strove to maintain a united front of these forces, which was created in the struggle for the defence of the territorial integrity, and for the other fundamental aim of its programme - autonomy. The idea of an autonomous Albania found support, first of all, among the masses of the people. They had fought for scores of years against the establishment of an alien centralized bureaucratic ottoman administration and to retain their self-government and administration with their own people. This support gave strength, security and confidence, to the League, especially its more progressive wing, to proceed boldly to realize this demand.

The idea of autonomy under the sovereignty of Turkey was supported by the national bourgeoisie and some of the big landowners who were linking themselves more and more with the market economy and were interested in the free development of local forces.

The League considered national autonomy a realistic solution to the Albanian question because it also paid attention to the operation of external factors. First of all, it must be said that the Sublime Porte would agree more readily, if it was obliged to do this, to the autonomy of the Albanian vilayet under its sovereignty than to its complete secession. However, the main external factor which made the League and the Albanian national movement in general stand for autonomy was the serious and continuous threat of partition by the neighbouring bourgeois states, a threat which hung over the heads of the people like the sword of Democles until 1913, when the imperialist powers mercilessly chopped up the body of Albania. In these conditions an autonomous Albania within the Ottoman Empire would ensure its territorial integrity both through the interest of the Sublime Porte in keeping the borders of the Empire untouched, and through the guarantees of the Great Powers for the maintenance of the status quo.

The League's concept of autonomy evolved from the Constitutional Act of the League to the formation of the Provisional Government and the open struggle against Turkey in its final stage. This evolution was determined by the flow of events, the increased mobilization of the people and the rise of their struggle, as well as the general development of the national consciousness. Although the Committee of Istanbul had been for the autonomy or independence of the country since before the founding of the League, in its Constitutional Act it did not formulate it clearly and fully. Its task was to organize all the interested social forces in the struggle to defend territorial integrity. It also hoped to profit from the interests of the Sublime Porte in maintaining the borders of the Empire. The League wanted to avoid provoking an immediate reaction on the part of the Ottoman administration and those local Turcophile landowners and clergy who could crush the League in its infancy. However this Act, while not allowing the Sublime Porte to meddle in the affairs of the League, sanctioned the League's right to act without consulting the Sublime Porte and, as events showed, even in opposition to it. The events immediately after June 10th and the outburst of the indignation of patriotic masses against the unjust decisions of the Congress of Berlin increased the authority of the League within a few weeks and enabled it to come out in July with demands of autonomy formulated in its General Convention in Dibra in November 1878. The programme adopted at this Convention called for the unification of Albania in a single vilayet with a centre in the middle of Albania in which officials would know the Albanian language, schools in all parts of the country would teach the Albanian language, a general assembly would implement reforms and have the right to use a sufficient amount of the income from the vilayet for local needs. This was the programme for the creation of the autonomous Albanian vilayet or province.

The League's concept of autonomy evolved along with the internal ideological and political struggle in its central and local organizations. Although autonomy under Ottoman sovereignty attracted other social groups besides the popular masses, the League could not preserve intact that broad front which was created when the question was about the territorial integrity. The influential Turcophile bourgeois, landowning and clerical circles and the Albanian circles of the Ottoman bureaucracy connected with the Porte, could adopt this programme only in case of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire and were ready to abandon it when the Ottoman



power was consolidated and the Porte was in a position to counteract. The waverings of these circles brought about differences in the League in the first months, and they went on deepening in the later years. This caused frequent changes in the composition of its Central Committee and local committees. The admission to these committees of "radical" autonomist elements, who stood for vigorous action and who mainly represented "the lower strata", or the creation of new committees from these elements impelled contemporary and later historians to compare the League to "The Committee of Public Safety" or the "Commune of Paris." With this comparison, they wanted to emphasize not historical analogies but the resolute and radical character of the activity of the League's more progressive wing, especially the peasants and urban common folk, who, as J.Jastrebov put it, "had nothing to lose if their activities were published", and who would spare nothing to accomplish their aims. This social revival enabled the League as a whole to operate more energetically in all directions, to develop on a broad scale its political and diplomatic struggle for the defence of the Albanian lands in the South in January-March 1879 and its armed struggle for the defence of the Albanian lands in the North from October 1879 to April 1880, and to take a further step and to raise the programme of autonomy to a higher level. The Assembly of Gjirokastra on July 23, 1880, with representatives from various regions of the northern and southern parts, approved the new programme presented by Abdyl Frasheri; it sought to create an autonomous Albanian state, with its own provisional government, its capital city in the middle of Albania, and an entirely Albanian administration. It specified that the officials would act without religious discrimination and would have the right to use state assets and income for the needs of the country apart from an annual cash payment to the Sublime Porte; the country's army would be placed in the service of the Empire only in case of war.

The Gjirokastra programme of autonomy indicates the second stage in the League's struggle for the defence of territorial and administrative integrity.

For the Committee of Istanbul and the League's progressive leaders, the Albanian autonomy was based on a given national territory and had an economic, social and cultural content which responded to the capitalist interests of the country. This concept, pervaded from end to end by a national and democratic spirit, rose above regionalism and the narrow local interests which conflicted with the idea of unification and national identity, it transcended the tendencies to return to the social institutions of the past (the Canon of Leke Dukagjini and the sheriat), which, although they were expressions of the resistance to the new legislation and administration of the foreign Ottoman rule, dragged the Albanian society backwards. The League has the historic merit that it raised the demands of the popular masses to the level of those for national and democratic autonomy, so as to give Albania, as Pashko Vasa wrote in 1879, "... a strong, homogenous and compact reorganization in conformity with its needs and with the character of its population, so that it would be placed through radical reforms in a condition to develop its own wisdom, wealth, and military power." This was an advanced and qualitatively new programme.

The realization of the autonomy was conditioned by its formal recognition by the Sublime Porte. But the League never was given this recognition. The government in Istanbul, hoping that it could use the Albanian Moslem population in the West, like the Arabs in the East, as a bastion of the Ottoman theocratic state, persistently followed a determined anti-Albanian policy. It employed every means to avoid recognizing for Albanians the autonomy they demanded and the most elementary national rights, and tried to suppress and liquidate any attempt of theirs in this direction. If, despite this, the League dared to rise against this policy openly, this speaks of its authority, its powerful support among the people, and its character as a political organization which had placed itself in the service of national interests and was determined to defend them at all costs.

The League's struggle for the recognition of the Albanian nation as one and indivisible,



for safeguarding the integrity of its territories, and for their unification under a single state administration respond to a legitimate objective and subjective requirement of the development of Albanian society. Its three fundamental tasks constituted three links inseparable from one another. The official recognition of the Albanian nation was not a simple act of registration. At a time when its existence was denied, both by Turkey and the Great Powers and even more by the neighbouring bourgeois states, it assumed immense political significance. Indissolubly connected with the recognition of the Albanian nation was the recognition of its territory and boundaries. With this, the League took the step to preserve the integrity and unity of these territories as a fundamental condition for national unity. At the basis of the League's struggle in defence of territorial integrity and for their union under a single administration lies the correct notion that there cannot be a nation without its own territory, and there cannot be national unity without territorial unity. These ideas of the League found their logical expression in its third task, the realization of this national territorial unity in an autonomous or independent Albanian national state.

What tactics did the League follow while it awaited official recognition of Albanian autonomy by Turkey? To answer this question means to point out a distinctive feature of the work of the League: its exercise of government functions, on its own initiative, achieving some degree of autonomy in practice. With the consolidation of its positions, the League utilized the fiery patriotic atmosphere created by the demands for defence and the numerous popular initiatives of self-government. It also took advantage of the interest of the Ottoman administration in the defence of the borders of the Empire which was paralyzed and incapable of opposing the aspirations of autonomy and the independent activities of the Albanians. The organs of the League operated "in the name of the Albanian people" and gradually transformed themselves, with more or less success, into organs of government which in fact displaced the foreign administration on the internal and external plane.

The organs of the League, while acknowledging the Sultan as head of the Islamic faith, were no longer subject to him in civilian and military matters. The Ottoman Vali passed his decision on to the League's Central Committee for approval and the League treated all the orders of the Ottoman administration only as recommendations. This duplicate government of the first phase was gradually replaced with one by the League. It began dismissing the Turkish officials and replacing them with Albanian ones, created its own voluntary military units and gendarmerie and disbanded the Turkish courts and set up Albanian courts with members of different faiths. The League applied an economic policy in conformity with the conditions of the war and with its needs, requiring contributions from the wealthy classes and neutralizing their hesitation through the pressure of "the common people". It imposed conscription for the defence of the country and did not accept the old system of substitutes (*bedel*) which was not in accord with the patriotic idea of defence as a duty for all, regardless of the economic situation. Even the opponents of the League had to admit that in the territory under its authority there existed the rule of law. The League prohibited the vendetta, prosecuted evil-doers; in other words, law and order was established, which these territories had never seen under the Ottoman domination. In all their work, the Committees of the League adopted the principles declared in the first memoranda about respecting equal rights between elements of different religions and nationalities and applied these principles in practice. They sternly denounced cases of mistreatment of and crimes against non-Albanians, and prohibited the recruitment of Albanians to the Turkish detachments meant for the suppression of the Macedonian liberation movement.

The League acted as a representative of the Albanian nation in the international arena, too. Its foreign policy for recognition of the Albanian nation and its rights by the Great Powers and the neighbouring states constitutes a separate chapter in its work. Its memoranda and protests addressed to those states and diplomacy of its official delegation headed by Abdyl Frasheri to the chancelleries of the Great Powers in the spring of 1879 are steps taken independently from the



Sublime Porte and contrary to its policy.

These independent and self-governing measures of the League had exacerbated its relations with the Sublime Porte. The events in the second half of 1880 marked a sharp turn in these relations. They faced the League not only with the ever greater pressure of the Great Powers and the neighbouring states, but also with an open military conflict with Turkey, which had decided to put down with force of arms the Albanian resistance and hand Ulqin over to Montenegro.

The bloody battles of the League with the Ottoman army in the defence of Ulqin and the handing over of Ulqin to Montenegro by Dervish Pasha paved the way for the next bold step towards autonomy. The open hostility to the Sublime Porte, which erupted in different parts of the country, especially Kosova, permitted the League to accomplish what it had sought to do in the Assembly of Gjirokastra. In January 1881, the new Central Committee, formed at Prizren with the more progressive and militant representatives of the League, proclaimed itself a "provisional government" headed by its outstanding fighter, Omer Prizreni.

This important historic act, the further administrative measures of the autonomous Albanian government, its efforts to extend its authority to all the Albanian territory and especially its open armed struggle against Turkey to defend the autonomy, pointed the highest stage of the struggle of the Albanian people for territorial and administrative autonomy.

At this stage, the Albanians achieved autonomy with publicly proclaimed violence. It went "too far", as contemporary observers say, and put an end even formally to the existence of the Ottoman administration in the territories under the Provisional Government. At this stage, when the League took over the running of the country, when Abdyl Frasheri issued the call: "... Let us make united Albania", its organizing, administrative and military capacities developed to new dimensions. The spring of the year 1881 was also a spring in political and social life when the masses tasted the true freedom of action as masters of their country. Their inexhaustible energies, their ardent patriotism and conscious discipline, essential conditions for an advanced state life, gave the League the strength to rise alone against the Ottoman Empire and to do battle with its immense armies.

With the creation of the Provisional Government, the local committees of the League became its subordinate administrative organs and the military units formed the national army. The decisions of the Assembly of Gjirokastra were being carried out. The autonomous national Albanian state begins from this.

Within a short time, the Provisional Government exercised its authority over the Vilayet of Kosova and part of the Vilayet of Manastir, where it found the soil prepared by the League's intense activity, and a freedom-loving population ready to support them. However, the League did not succeed in including all national territories under its full authority or in uniting them under the leadership of the Provisional Government. The Ottoman armies compelled the new, not fully established, government to undergo its baptism with fire and to fight for its existence until it was savagely suppressed by them.

For the first time in the country's history since the glorious epoch of Skanderbeg, the League channelled the streams and currents of age-old liberation trends into the broad river of a national movement which flowed powerful and unstoppable, opening new courses and overcoming countless obstacles which had been erected during more than four centuries of onerous bondage in the historical course of the Albanian people. Taking over the positive heritage of the previous decades, it raised the struggle to a higher stage in all fields, ideological, political, cultural, organizational, military and diplomatic.

During its three-year history, the League affirmed such revolutionary principles and consecrated such revolutionary practices of the struggle for national liberation and national unity as do it honour and remain the basis of the National Renaissance.

The League proved that the Albanian people, like all other peoples, still had inexhaustible energies and a national consciousness which made it a nation with its own history, traditions,



language and culture. This nation small and alone as it was, strove with rifle and pen, with patriotism, and determination and imposed its will on the capitalist Great Powers and the neighbouring Balkan monarchies.

In its character and policies, the League as a national movement was not an isolated phenomenon neither on the Balkan nor on the European plane. Although it had distinctive features determined by its concrete historical conditions, the League was a component part of the national liberation movements which characterized the history of the Balkans and Europe in the 19th century. As a result of national movements, the problem of the liberation and unification of the oppressed nations had emerged forcefully on the political scene, accompanied with a whole democratic and progressive political and social literature on the principles of nationality. The men of our Renaissance who led the Albanian national movement, in general, and the League of Prizren, in particular, were enlightened by these ideas of European revolutionary democracy.

The liberation struggle of the Albanian people under the leadership of the League of Prizren inspired the most brilliant Albanian minds, which had placed themselves at its service, to expound and defend the national programme, and to rapidly develop the culture as its inseparable component.

#### NOTES

\* Abridged from *The Albanian League of Prizren 1878-1881*, Tirana 1978.

1. Subsequent studies put the number of Albanians at about 1.5 million. (ed.)



## THE POLICY OF THE SERBIAN GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE ALBANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN 1908-1912 (\*)

Following the coup d'état of May 1903 and the ascent to the throne of the Karageorgevic dynasty, the foreign policy of Serbia underwent a radical change.(1) Now it sought a maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans and complete implementation of the action for reforms which were established through the agreement of Murzsteg; hence, it emerges openly as an opponent of the revolutionary movement, in general, and of the so-called "Ancient Serbia" (Kosova - ed.), in particular. Therefore, this state concentrated all the intensive political and diplomatic activity on its efforts to ensure the support of Russia for this policy, to oppose as much as possible the extension of the political influence of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans and any action on its part in Kosova, and to incite the antagonism between Italy and Austria-Hungary, aiming to take advantage of this rivalry for the benefit of its own political interests. (2)

The Serbian diplomacy, relying on the strong support of the Russian diplomacy, was committed uninterruptedly to quelling the Albanian movement, either through the continual steps taken with the Sublime Porte or through joint political actions with other Balkan states. On behalf of the policy of maintenance of the status quo, it sought the extension of reforms to the Vilayet of Kosova, not because it was interested in the improvement of the conditions of the oppressed population, but because it wanted this zone to be recognized as one of a Slav character. On the pretext of "the preservation of order in the Turkish provinces", "improvement of the situation of the Serbian population" and "the eradication of Albanian disturbances", the Serbian Government, always supported by the Russian ambassador, Zinoviev, demanded that Istanbul take energetic measures for the pacification of Albanians in the regions of Mitrovitca, Gjakova, Peja, Luma and elsewhere.(3)

Besides diplomatic steps in Istanbul, the Foreign Ministry of Serbia demanded that its representations in Turkey concentrate on undermining the Albanian National Movement. It recommended a series of measures to achieve this aim: the corruption and winning over of big beys who would work to the advantage of the political aims of the Serbian bourgeoisie and who, at the same time, would take the Serbian element *under protection*; then the maximum use of vendetta to encourage fratricide amongst different clans and, finally, the hiring of suitable persons (through money and expensive gifts) to liquidate prominent leaders. (4)

Serbia was the only Slav state of the Balkans which, from the outset, declared itself against the uprising of Kosova in 1910 and was concerned that it should be put down as rapidly and as energetically as possible. (5)

The uprising of Kosova broke out at a time when Serbia, because of its political, economic and military interests, was developing good relations with Turkey, pursuing, we might say, a Turkophil policy. With the creation of favourable conditions of the expansion of trade in that region and the ever greater engagement of the state, it was brought about that the economic action was harmonized with the *national and educational* action. The Serbian Government took control of the issue of credit for Serbian trade at the most important points of the Vilayets of Kosova and Manastir, and so the commercial activity of agencies in Manastir and Shkup was linked closely with politics and propaganda. (6)

Besides this, while representing itself as a supporter, of peace in the Balkans, Serbia, always relying on the support of Czarist Russia, engaged in vigorous diplomatic activity to



ensure that Italy, France and Britain gave their support to the pacification and disarmament of the Albanian population. Milovanovic, father of Serbian foreign policy, thought that it would be in the specific interests of Serbia, as well as in those of other Balkan states, that the armed conflict of Albanians with Turks should be as great a bloodshed as possible, so that both sides were damaged to the maximum. As he foresaw developments, in this way a twofold aim would be achieved : first, the weakening of Turkey, which would make the future war of the alliance easier, and, second, the Albanians, subjugated by the Turkish army, would reach such a situation /.../ *that they placed themselves in the service of the Serbian state idea and this would be achieved the more easily when the Albanians had been weakened as much as possible and were in the worst possible situation.* (7)

Therefore, the Serbian Government undertook actions in all directions and with all its means to ensure that Turkey engaged in military operations of broad proportions. To this end, it undertook continual diplomatic steps in Istanbul. The Serbian consul had several meetings with the foreign minister Rifat Pasha, to whom he always stressed that suppression of the uprising and subjugations of the Albanians would be indispensable, because only in this way could anarchy be eliminated and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire be ensured, while any further intervention of Austria-Hungary, which might cause new complications in the Balkans, would be removed.

During the operation of the Turkish army in the direction of Caraleva - the most important point of the insurgents' resistance after the fall of the Gorge of Kaçanik - the Serbian consul in Prishtina received instructions to give the Turkish expedition every support. He ordered the Serbian peasants and teachers around Ferizaj and Nerodime to place themselves in the service of Turgut Pasha. (8) After consultations with the Turkish staff officers at Ferizaj, they went all over the mountainous zone, observing the terrain and gathering valuable notes about the points of concentration of insurgents and their number; they spread rumours about the advance of a big army in the region and tried to convince the insurgents to give up their hopeless resistance and open the path for the passage of the army. Since a part of the Turkish army, which had to operate in the direction of Jezerca and Budakova to attack the Albanian forces at Caraleva from the flanks, did not know the routes through the mountainous terrain, the Serbian guides, together with Rruste Kabashi, led the Turkish vanguard to the short route Mali i Kukes - Balic - Biranic - Bllagun - Maja e Zeze - Prasak (hamlet of Jezerca village). The main body of the army set out on this route immediately penetrated to St. Ilia and, after bloody fighting in the vicinity of Jezerca, launched a surprise attack on the forces of Isa Boletini. (9)

The Serbian Government maintained a correct stand towards Turkey on the question of refugees, too. The insurgents of the regions of Gjilan, Karadak, Llap and Golak remained hidden for some time in dense forests, until in the end, pursued by the Turkish army and gendarmerie, they were forced to seek another way out. Serbia was closest, therefore, they decided to seek sanctuary there, in the zone of Leskovc, where there was an Albanian population, in the hope that they would find a welcome. However, the Serbian Government did not permit this, since it did not respond to its political interests; (10) therefore, the border organs received orders to establish strong control on all paths over the border. The only exception was made for some chiefs who sided with Serbia and who might be used later to the advantage of its political propaganda in Kosova. When it was learned that the Bulgarian komitadjis had gone to Karadak on several occasions to make contact with Idriz Seferi and offer him safe passage to Bulgaria, the prefect of Vranja informed the outstanding leader of the uprising that the Serbian Government would give them sanctuary; therefore, he could go to Serbia whenever he wanted. Seferi declared to the envoys that he could not cross the border for fear that the Serbian authorities would betray him by handing him over to the Turkish organs. (11) In fact, it had never crossed his mind to accept this hospitality and leave Kosova, because his highlander intuition told him that this apparently noble gesture had other ulterior motives. Although



relentlessly pursued by the patrols of the gendarmerie and the army, he remained the whole time in Karadak among his loyal friends and cofighters.

While continuing the course of the policy of narrow state interests and its complete harmonization with the Balkan policy of Russia, and then sincere friendship with Turkey and close collaboration in order to maintain peace in the Balkans, the Serbian Government maintained the same attitude, towards the Albanian uprising of 1911 (in the Mbishkodra Highland - ed.); which it had taken towards the uprising of Kosova a year earlier. At the same time, it engaged in intensive diplomatic and political work to ensure that the other Balkan states - first of all, Montenegro - did not give the uprising any support.

During the preparation for the uprising, the Albanian committees attempted to win the collaboration of not only the Montenegrin and Greek Governments but also the Serbian Government.

During a short visit to Belgrade, Nikolla Ivanaj held talks about the aid which Serbia would give the uprising, and then he returned to Rome where he awaited the reply of the Serbian Government. However, the consul Vujic let him know that it was anyway negative. (12) Some days later he informed (Ricciotti - ed.) Garibaldi that the Serbian Government would remain entirely neutral as long as the events in Turkey did not take a direction which endangered the state interests of Serbia. (13)

King Nicholas I Petrovic, who since his youth had been completely taken up with the idea of the creation of the great Montenegrin state, which according to his plans would include the bulk of Northern Albania, the Dukagjin Plateau and even remote Dibra e Madhe, (14) had decided to assist the uprising with all his means. He calculated that he would achieve his plans of occupation and tried to find allies to achieve his purpose.

The Serbian Government described such an action as entirely foolhardy. Therefore, it recommended to Kral Nicholas that he give up this dangerous adventure and tried to convince him that it was not in the interests of the idea of Great-Serbian and Serbism that the insurrection should flare up and even less that a situation should be created which would give some great power - namely Austria-Hungary - a pretext for intervention. (15) It gave him this advice in accord with the policy of Russia.

When the highlanders hurled themselves into armed actions and the insurrection was flaring up, the Serbian Government was seriously afraid of the complications which the Albanian question might cause in the relations of Serbia with Bulgaria and Montenegro.

Analysing the circumstances in detail and consulting continually with Hartwig, the Russian consul in Belgrade, who is a recognized specimen of pan-Slavism, Milovanovic drew the conclusion that the Albanian question was important in impelling Serbia to intensify its political efforts to eliminate the collaboration of Bulgarians with the Albanian insurgents, on the one hand, and to give Serbo-Bulgarian relations a new content and quality, and to accelerate the process of the grouping of Slavs, on the other. First of all, he demanded that the consul Milojevic find out from official sources whether a suitable political climate existed in Sofia to start preliminary talks and, meanwhile, he sent Spalajkovic there with a secret mission of preparing the terrain for the meeting with Geshov. (16)

In the long conversation which he had with Geshov, Spalajkovic pointed out that the main motive of the meeting with Milovanovic was the Albanian question which was coming to the fore at the moment when the Great Powers, especially Russia, were not prepared to liquidate the Balkan problem. Serbia, together with Russia, would work on Montenegro to avoid any ill-considered action, which in those circumstances would lead to catastrophe. Besides this, according to Spalajkovic, Austria-Hungary would not make any kind of compromise or any political alliance with the Slav states; for this reason, it was highlighting on another ethnic group - the Albanians - which it would manipulate in the future, as the most reliable and loyal nationality in Turkey. According to him, Austria-Hungary would achieve this more easily



because for the programme of its Balkan policy it had a positive basis - its Kulturprotektorat in Albania. (17)

Spalajkovic thought that of the time being Vienna would not allow Turkey to wipe out the Albanian nationality and, meanwhile, would raise the idea of national unity, while in the end that of the autonomy of Albania. "In brief", he said, "by playing the role of patron of the Albanians and Catholics of the Balkans, Austria-Hungary is opposing Russia which comes to the defence of the Slav and Orthodox population in the Turkish Empire." From this he concluded that the political program of Vienna was equally dangerous for all the Orthodox peoples - the Serbs, the Bulgarian and the Greeks - therefore, according to him, Serbia and Bulgaria, in the first place, ought to liquidate the Turkish question, without ever including the Albanians in this as a fourth element. The idea about Albanian autonomy (according to Spalajkovic - ed.) is dangerous for another reason: the Albanians, inspired and supported from abroad, are already raising claims to the Vilayets of Kosova and Manastir. Therefore, the whole policy of Serbia and Bulgaria towards the Albanians should be directed to achieve two aims: to use them as a tool and to alianate them from Austria-Hungary and to spare no means to prevent the creation of an Albanian state formation at all costs. (18)

Along with efforts to dissuade Montenegro from intervening in the Albanian-Turkish conflict, as well as efforts which had been made earlier to eliminate the inclusion of refugees from Kosova in the insurrection of the Highlands, (19) the Serbian Government, together with all its official press, praised the Young Turk regime for the punitive expedition and the measures which it took to prevent the extension of the uprising to the other provinces. Therefore, it gave great importance and publicity to the test trip which Sultan Mehmet V made to Kosova.

On the occasion of the arrival of the Sultan in Kosova, consul Rakic worked to ensure that all the Serbian population without exception turned out to welcome him and put on a rich program of celebrations. His idea was to give Mehmet V the impression that the Serbian nationality constituted the element most loyal to the Turkish state and to attract the attention of the diplomatic representatives of the Great Powers who took part in this welcome of the Sultan to the fact that *besides Albanians, there were also the native Serbs in Kosova*. (20) To this end, they organized the participation of the *Kosova* musical society and the *Bogoslovi* choir of Prizren in the programme of welcome, as well as of the "Dusan Silni" sports association from Mitrovitca and Prishtina, an organization which, in fact, had a military character and was financed by Serbia. Its members paraded through the main street of the city led by the Turkish military band. (21)

The Albanian population of Prishtina and other districts, which had been brought here willingly or unwillingly, maintained a cold and indifferent stand towards the Sultan's visit and did not take a kindly view of the display arranged with care by the Serbian Government. This demonstration of loyalty towards the Young Turk regime, directed by and for the benefit of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie, provoked the anger of the Albanian nationality, poisoned its relations with the Serbian nationality, and led to a further worsening of relations between them. (22)

The intensive political campaign which the Turkish Government launched against the memorandum of Greça (memorandum of the insurgents of 1911, which demanded the autonomy of Albania - ed.), as well as the effort which it made to exclude Kosova and other regions from the demands included in the "red book", found the support of the *Organization of Ottoman Serbs* and its press ("Vardar", "Carigradski", "Glasnik"). In this direction, it managed to recruit a part of the Serbian population, a thing which was displayed clearly in the case of protest meetings in a number of towns of the Vilayet of Kosova, as well as in petitions concocted by the Turkish state. According to instructions from above, the consuls in Prishtina and Shkup suggested to the Serbs that they should take an active part in these anti-autonomous demonstrations, appoint the people who were to make the speeches on these occasions and



sternly condemn the Albanians' demands for autonomy. It is quite understandable that such an exposure and solidarity with the chauvinist and divisive policy (23) of the Young Turk regime would be and was received with indignation by the Albanians. It opened the way for a bitter polemic between the newspapers *Shkupi* and *Vardar* and deepened the gulf of division and intolerance between two oppressed nationalities. The Turkish Government further incited this antagonism by publicizing the Serbian element as the nationality which had maintained a loyal stand towards the Empire since the revolution in 1908, while the Turkish officers, members of the Unity and Progress Committee, declared openly that the Government would devote its full attention to the Serbs, giving them privileges in the future, because in this way, it would ensure their support in the struggle against the Albanian movement. The reason for the recruiting of the Serbian element in the Turkish army was explained precisely in this spirit.(24)

### III

In the historiographic writings of various authors who deal with the question of the organization of the Albanians' general uprising of 1912, it has frequently been stressed that the ideological leaders of the national movement maintained a stand of reserve towards reliance on the cooperation with and aid of the Balkan countries, especially of Serbia. The Serbian Government was ready to fulfil their request for weapons, munition and a sum of money, but on condition that they would act in the future according to the instructions of the consul of Prishtina alone. (25) The first and main condition for receiving aid was abandonment of any aim for administrative autonomy.

On May 15, Milovanovic informed the Russian consul in Belgrade that all the efforts which Serbia had made to influence the Albanians to wait a little longer had been in vain, and thus, it was faced with a *fait accompli*.

With the concentration of the insurgent forces on the Kosova Plateau, Prishtina became a centre of gathering of the leaders of the Albanian National Movement and prominent patriots. At the same time, however, a strong point was opened here for the intensive propaganda and political activity of Serbia, which was intended to achieve two aims: to influence the Albanian-Turkish talks to the extent that the demands directed to the government commission were narrowed and divested of their national character; and likewise, to influence the leaders of the uprising so that the Albanian armed forces leave Prishtina as quickly as possible and withdraw towards the south. Thus, Hasan Prishtina and his consistent followers began the talks with Ibrahim Pasha in unfavourable circumstances - encountering the resistance of the Turkophile gentry and the undermining activity of the above-mentioned propaganda. While he was struggling with all his might for the proclamation of national demands in the spirit of the Memorandum of Greçka, the envoys of the Serbian Government, the agents of the information service, trusted persons of the nationalist organizations and the staff of the consulates of Prishtina and Shkup worked to sow division between the leaders of the uprising by deepening the differences between the *autonomists* and the *reformists*. (26)

With the end of the general uprising of the Albanians and the approach of the Balkan War, Serbia concentrated on preparing the ground to develop the operations of the war more e  
this context, the stands of the Albanians had special importance.

On the eve of the outbreak of the war with the Balkan allies, Istanbul tried to create from the Albanian population a kind of popular army which would operate jointly with the Turkish army. The Vali of Kosova issued appeals to the Albanians to forget their hostility to the Young Turk regime because of the danger that was threatening them, first of all. While Ibrahim Pasha, who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the military troops of the Vilayet of



Kosova, invited Bajram Curri, Isa Boletini, N.Draga, Riza Beg Kryeziu and other chiefs to go to Shkup for consultation about the organization of the joint defence. It is quite certain that Ibrahim Pasha had been authorized by his Government to arm the Albanian population, and this was the first question that he had to settle in agreement with the chiefs. On the other hand, in order to create the impression among the people that the Government in Istanbul was ready to carry out the points of the agreement achieved, 35 000 Turkish lira had been placed at his disposal as compensation for the ruin of households. (27)

Ibrahim Pasha's action served the Serbian Government as a pretext to begin a series of diplomatic steps against the arming of the Albanians, claiming that through this act the security and existence of the Serbians in Turkey was endangered. Just as in the end of the 19th century, it again raised the question of the deplorable situation of the Serbian nationality, launched a campaign of slanders against Albanians, concocting long lists of robberies, murders and other acts of violence, which they had allegedly committed against the Serbian population. (28) These lists of "evidence" with which they began to fill the pages of the official press in order to fan chauvinist passions higher, (29) were also handed to the Sublime Porte, all diplomatic representations in Belgrade and the editors of newspapers with a pro-Serbian orientation. At the same time, the consuls of Serbia in London, Paris and Petrograd received instructions to stress to the Governments where they worked the essential needs to supply the Serbian elements in Turkey with arms, so that they could cope with the danger which was allegedly threatening them from the Albanians. (30) In the steps which the Serbian consul in Istanbul took at the end of August, it was demanded that, if the Turkish Government was not capable of re-establishing law and order, arms should be issued to the Serbs so that they could defend themselves from the "infuriated Muslims." (31)

On the other hand, the Pasic Government continued its intensive political propaganda to dissuade the Albanians from organizing their resistance and, at the same time, to win their support for its action of the war. Alexander, the heir to the throne, demanded that every means be used to achieve this aim; therefore, he ordered the foreign minister Jovanovic to dispatch the greatest possible number of agents and envoys to the Albanian chiefs, making available an unlimited sum of money. (32)

Nevertheless the outstanding leaders of the national movement - Hasan Prishtina, Idriz Seferi, Isa Boletini, Bajram Curri and others - to win whose support the Serbian Government used every means, remained determined to fight to the end. They publicly warned of the general danger, maintained continual contacts, organized meetings and made plans, called on the people to take up arms again in order to defend their homes from the new invaders. (33)



## NOTES

\* Abridged from the review *Gjurmime Albanologjike*, Series of Historical Sciences, no.6, 1976, Prishtina 1977.

1 Ivan Bozic, *Istorija Jugoslavije*, Belgrade 1974, Prosveta..., p. 337.

2 Ljiljana Aleksic-Pejkovic, *Odnosi Srbije sa Francuskom i Engleskom 1903-1914*, Belgrade 1965, p.32.

3 Jovan M.Jovanovic, *Juzna Srbija od kraja XVIII veka do Oslobodjenja, Srpski narod u XIX veku*, knj. sesnaesta, Belgrade (s.a.), p. 159.

4 Arhiv Jugoslavije (in cont.: AJ) Fund of Jovan M.Jovanovic-Pizon, box 23; (report of the consul Milan Rakic from Prishtina), PP. no. 18, Jan.1, 1907.

The Foreign Ministry of Serbia had long since approved the proposal of M.Spajkovic about the wiping out of the *most dangerous Albanian chiefs*. This was to be achieved through continuous incitement of vendetta, or the killing of prominent chiefs by paying various persons. According to instructions from above, the consulate of Prishtina operated systematically in this direction. The vice-consul and well-known poet, M.Rakic, continued such work. In his report he stressed the difficulties in connection with the liquidation of Albanian chiefs; according to him, this required suitable occasions, spending large amounts of money and collaboration with the Turkish authorities.

Rakic also proposed intensification of the political activity connected with winning over chiefs in zones where there were no Serbian elements in Llap and Drenica; in the former, because it was situated on the border with Serbia and so, when the coming war with Turkey began, the Serbian army would enter Kosova through Llap. Meanwhile, leaders in Drenica should be won over with the aim that in the meetings of Albanian chiefs they would favour collaboration with Serbia. In this case, it would not arouse any sort of suspicion since there were no Serbs in those parts.

5 Vl.Corovic, *Odnosi Srbije i Austro-Ugarske u XX veku*, 314 s.

6 D.Djordjevic, *Carinski rat Austro-Ugarske i Srbije*, 573 s.

7 In his political combinations, Milovanovic did not rule out the possibility of holding talks with the Albanians to reach an agreement, but only on condition that this eventual agreement would entirely serve Serbian political interests and, consequently, serve the expansionist plans of the Serbian bourgeoisie. As, Hartije M.Milovanovica (note of June 11, 1910).

8 Aj, k.22, 181 (telegram of M.Milovanovic to the consul of Shkup, April 15, 1910).

9 *Ibidem*, R.23 (report of Spiro Ristic from Shkup, April 28, 1910), k.23, 125-133 (copy of the report of Dimitrije Dimitrijevic (notary of the consulate from Shkup), PP, no.944, April 29, 1910).

10 In the talk he had with King Nicholas, the consul of Serbia Petkovic presented the sheltering of insurgents, especially Isa Boletini and H.Ferri (...), *the greatest enemies and killers of the Serbian people*, as a major issue.

Diplomatiski arhiv Saveznog sekretarjata inostranih poslova, Belgrade, in cont.: DASSIP, report of the consul Petkovic.

11 DASSIP, Politicko-Propagando (in cont.: PP), f.E, PP no. 11881, March 2, 1911 (report of the prefect of Vranja, Konf.no. 202, February 28, 1911).

12 DASSIP, f.IV, cf.no.711 (report of Vujic, cf. no.69, April 21, 1911).

13 *Ibidem*, (ciphered telegram of Milovanovic to the consul Vujic, March 12, 1911).

14 Vuk Vinaver, *Ivandanjski teror i Crnogorci*, Istorijski Glasnik 1-2/1958, 73.

15 Vl.Corovic, *op.cit.*, p.351.



16 DASSIP, *Politicko-Odelenje* (in cont.: PO), p.X, cf.no. 954 (report of Spalajkovic, conf.no.221, June 2, 1911).

17 *Ibidem*.

18 *Ibidem*.

19 DASSIP, PP, f.A, PP.no.1789 (see reports of consul Rakic date March 19 and February 27, 1911).

20 *Ibidem*, PP, f.S, PP, no.3049, May 23, 1911 (report of Rakic, PP no.320, May 19, 1911).

21 *Ibidem*, PP, no.3383, June 8, 1911 (report of Rakic, PP no.380, June 4, 1911).

22 The ceremony which was organized at Gazimestan at the shrine of Sultan Murat ended in an incident. A group of Albanians who were returning angry to Prishtina, attacked a column of young guards and created a disturbance. Order was established through intervention of the army.

Milan R.Radovanovic, *Sokolsko Drustvo u Pristini od 1909 do 1912 godine, Prilozi za istoriju fizicke kulture Kosova*, Prishtina, 1/1969, 55.

23 DASSIP, PP, f.A, PP no.4390, July 16, 1911 (report of Rakic, PP, no.511, July 13, 1911).

24 DASSIP, PO, f.X, conf.no.1317, (report of Rakic, conf.no. 498, July 10, 1911).

25 DASSIP, PP, no.678, February 11, 1912 (telegram of consul Milojevic, February 9, 1912); PP. no.129, March 3, 1912 (report of Milojevic, PP. no.215, February 26, 1912).

26 AS, Hartije, N.Pasic - pisma poverljivih lica.

27 DASSIP, PO, f.VIII conf.no.3526 (report of Gavrilovic from Shkup, PP, no.1671, August 31, 1912); f.XI, R/31; conf. no. 1542 (telegram of Milojevic, September 17, 1912).

28 S.Pollo, *The Proclamation of Independence of Albania*, p.75.

29 Dimitrije Popovic, *Borba za narodno ujedinjenje*, Belgrade (s.a).

30 DASSIP, PP, f O-105, PP, no.5191, August 22, 1912 (telegram of the consulate of Istanbul, PP, no.683, August 13, 1912).

31 *Ibid*. PP, no. 5194, August 22, 1912 (report of the consulate in Istanbul, PP, no.683, August 14, 1912).

32 AJ, K.37, 8 (letter of Alexander Karageorgevic to J.Jovanovic, August 19, 1912).

33 DASSIP, PO, Hartije N.Pasica, conf.no. 3728 (letter of courier, September 22, 1912), *Liria Kombetare*, no.35, November 28, 1926.



## **ON THE SETTING OF THE BORDERS OF ALBANIA IN THE NORTH AND NORTHEAST (\*)**

In November 1912 the Albanian National Movement was crowned with the proclamation of the Independence of Albania. The assembly of the representatives of the nation in the city of Vlora along with the secession from Turkey, formed also a provisional government, thus laying the corner-stone for the building of an independent Albanian state.

The situation in the Balkans was fluid. After repeated uprisings in the Albanian territories, the First Balkan War broke out in October 1912. The Ottoman Empire was unable to withstand the combined attacks of the Balkan states: the Turkish troops were in retreat everywhere. It was the end of the Turkish rule on the Peninsula. Following the Greeks, the Rumanians and the Southern Slavs (Serbs and Bulgarians), the Albanians, too, emerged to independent state life.

Thus, the Eastern Question entered its final stage. As before, indeed more than before, it attracted the active attention of the Great Powers. Although the outbreak of the Turkish-Balkan war in October took them somewhat by surprise, the Great Powers quickly intervened in order to control the post-war settlement in a region of such special strategic importance as Southeast Europe.

This was the aim of the Ambassadors' Conference of the six Great Powers of the time, which was convened in London in mid-December 1912. For about nine months, until August 1913, it turned into an arena of fierce diplomatic struggle, engaged almost exclusively with the Albanian question which became an extremely complicated tangle because of the contradictions among the European Great Powers and the aims of the Balkan states.

1. The Ambassadors' Conference examined the Albanian question from several aspects. It ignored the decisions of the Assembly of Vlora and did not recognize the provisional government which had been formed there; it decided that the organization of the new Albanian state should be "internationalized", be started ex novo, and be done by the Great Powers themselves. In this way the Albanian Principality with the German prince Wilhelm von Wied as its monarch was created in 1914.

Nevertheless, the problem which was discussed at great length at the London Conference and caused most disagreement among the Great Powers was that of setting the borders between Albania and the neighbouring states. At the first meeting of the Conference, on December 17, 1912, it was apparent that this question would occupy a central place in the proceedings. In reality, together with the main stands, the great difficulties involved in the setting of borders appeared there.

Nevertheless, at the first meeting a general conclusion was reached which could be considered as a preliminary agreement: it was decided that an autonomous Albania would have common borders with Montenegro in the North and Greece in the South. This indirectly ruled out the possibility of the territorial extension of Serbia in the direction of the Adriatic Sea, which could be done only through the annexation, by Serbia, of Albanian territories in the North. (1)

On the other hand, Serbia's long-standing claim to an "outlet" to the Adriatic was not completely rejected. The Great Powers agreed to recognize Serbia's right to a "commercial" outlet to the Adriatic, a right which would be exercised by using a "free and neutralized" Albanian port (Shengjin), (2) the administration of which would be under the supervision of a special international force. (3) The further development of events, however, showed



that this solution was impracticable.

From its beginning, in mid-December 1912, until May 1913, the Conference dealt for several successive months almost entirely with the question of the borders. The danger, which threatened the integrity of the Albanian territories, became apparent at the first meetings of the Conference, when the Ambassadors began to exchange opinions about the criteria which would serve as a rule for the determination of the borders. In this instance, the ethnic criterion (the principle of nationality) ran counter to that of "the right of the victor in war". This meant that some Albanian territories would have to be sacrificed under "the right of war" to satisfy the appetites for territorial expansion of the Balkan allies, because they had won the war.

Obviously all the Great Powers did not have the same position. The stand of Austria-Hungary, in particular, differed from that of the others. It was interested in an Albania with the widest possible territorial extension, especially to the north and northeast. In Vienna they saw clearly that only in this way would Albania be able to become "viable" (capable of existing) and serve the Balkan policy of the double monarchy as a barrier against Slav expansion on the Peninsula. In these circumstances, the Viennese diplomacy supported the ethnic principle in the setting of borders, but as ambassador Mensdorf wrote to his centre: "The opinion of all colleagues is that no headway can be made through ethnographic considerations." (4) Vienna was in a dilemma, wavering between the plan to include as much Albanian land as possible within the borders of the new state and the "logic" of the war conquest. E.C.Helmreich, who has written most about the diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, has described the contradictory position of Austria-Hungary on the question of determining the borders of Albania, saying: "The Austrian statesmen, who put their (Balkan) policy on the card of Albania, were determined that the Albanian state should become as viable (*lebensfähig*) as possible", but "on the other hand, they understood very well that they could not fail to take account of the events of the war: the victors would demand the spoils that belonged to them." (5)

Hence, the Albanian territory had to be included in "the spoils that belonged to the victors"; this was the dominant idea in diplomatic circles, indeed even Vienna willy-nilly had to accept it. Thus, all the participants in the Conference were actually of the common opinion that the Albanian territories would be affected by the consequences of Turkish defeat in the war (differences had to do with the degree of these consequences). Such a stand was not justified even from the viewpoint of formal justice, because, for the Albanians, Turkey's War with the Balkan allies was not their war, indeed, they had made a valuable contribution to the war against the Sublime Porte through a succession of uprisings, especially the General Uprising of 1912 on the eve of the outbreak of the First Balkan War.

2. In the history of the Eastern Question, as one of the most important questions of European diplomacy during the 19th century and the early 20th century, the fate of the regions inhabited by the Albanian population and the ambitions and efforts of the new Balkan states for expansion to those territories occupied a prominent place. The Great Powers of Europe have used precisely the Albanian territories as a means to satisfy their Balkan clients.

The first stage of the partitioning of Albanian territories was that of the Eastern Crisis of the last quarter of the 19th century (1875-1881), when some territories in the north and northeast were handed over to Montenegro and Serbia. However, the second and more important stage, fraught with threats to the very existence of the Albanian nation, was the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913. Not only the treaties of the Balkan Alliance, but also the deployment of occupation troops on Albania's territory showed clearly that the allies were determined to make the maximum territorial gains from the defeat of the Turkish troops. Their initial plans left no margin at all for the creation of an independent Albanian state. Suffice it to mention that at one time it was reckoned that the Shkumbin River would be the borderline between Montenegro and Serbia from the territories that would be handed over to Greece.



Only when they were faced with the vigorous growth of the Albanian National Movement and the contradictions which divided the imperialist Great Powers, the leaders of the Balkan states were obliged to revise their demands, although they never ceased their efforts to grab as much territory as possible from the body of Albania.

The Memorandum of the Serbian Government, which was presented at the Ambassadors' Conference at the beginning of January 1913,(6) is clear evidence of this tendency. It appears that Montenegro did not formulate its territorial claims separately in writing, as the Serbs did. However, perhaps it considered this unnecessary, since Cetina intended to keep the territories in the north, which it had managed to occupy before the London Conference began its work; apart from that, it expected the fall at any moment of besieged Shkodra, (7) which constituted the core of its ambitions for territorial expansion. In any case, it is no exaggeration to say that, even if it lacked the Montenegrin endorsement, the Serbian Memorandum, because of its content can, in the last analysis, be considered the common platform of the claims of the two Slav states to the whole of Northern Albania.

As to the Memorandum of the Serbian Government, it is at the same time both a manifesto of the Great-Serb expansionist policy and a specimen of the unrestrained anti-Albanian propaganda. It strikes one right from the start that the creation of an Albanian state (on which the Great Powers had already agreed in principle) is presented as a solution requiring sacrifices on the part of the Serbs, since it presupposed that Belgrade would withdraw its troops from the regions of Northern Albania occupied by force of arms. Serbia, as a victor belligerent party, "agreed" to limit its rights to hold these territories permanently (in the Memorandum the actual occupation is described as sufficient justification), but only up to a certain point and for part of the territories, in order to comply with "the desires and interests of the Great Powers." So, although it had to abandon its initial plans to seize all Northern Albania, Serbia was no less determined to make the greatest possible territorial gains. On this point, the Serbian ambitions were one with those of the Montenegrins: securing the largest territory possible for the Slav outlet to the Adriatic coast.

Apart from the "right of occupation", in the Serbian Memorandum there are other arguments which the authors overemphasized such as "the historic, ethnographic, cultural and moral rights" underlying the territorial demands. Nowhere else does the chauvinist character of the Serbian platform emerge more clearly than from this platform filled with distortions of facts, arbitrary interpretations, self-glorification and, at the same time, insulting and disparaging judgements about the Albanians. From this stand-point the Serbian Memorandum undoubtedly is a concentrated form of the anti-Albanian theses which have poured out wholesale from the arsenal of Great-Serb propaganda in this period and which have reappeared in extremely virulent forms in an extensive Yugoslav literature of different periods. Historical "works" or official documents, all aim at the one point: they deny the history of our people, contribute utterly primitive forms of life to it, and on this basis raise territorial claims to Albanian lands.

The so-called historical rights have occupied and continue to occupy a prominent place in the totally abusive arguments of the Serbian chauvinist circles. At the time of the delimitation of the borders in 1913, these arguments were carried to absurd lengths virtually demanding the revival of the mediaeval empire of Stefan Dusan who had seized more than half the Peninsula. It is no accident that the first part of the Serbian Memorandum refers explicitly to this period. It is clear that its aim was not simply to evoke the glories of the past; it was to find a justification for grabbing the territories of others. Indeed, in the Memorandum of the Belgrade Government the reasoning has been turned upside down, because, if anything, "historical rights" testify precisely to the autochthony of the Albanians in the territories inhabited by them since the most ancient times.

Perhaps it would not be worth while to dwell in particular on this question, were it not for the reason that "the historical rights" are even today the main card, not only of Yugoslav



propaganda, but also of Yugoslav historiography, which is trying to prove that the Albanians are "newcomers" in their own homes, a population of invaders established "through violence", "through usurpation" in the Slav territory. The centuries of Ottoman oppression, under which the Albanian population suffered, too, are not even mentioned, but its place is taken by what is described at length in the Memorandum as "atrocities of the Albanians". From this it seems as if the Albanians' right to live in these territories is due to the Serbian spirit of tolerance and generosity.

As everywhere, but especially in the Balkans, "the historical rights" in the meaning which chauvinist circles give them, are in open contradiction with the ethnic situations which have developed gradually over the centuries. The movements of populations are a recognized phenomenon and have occurred in our Peninsula, too, but not in one direction. Indeed, it must be said that a tendency characteristic of the Albanian population has been that of shrinking, not expansion or extension, as is claimed by the Serbian side at both official and "scientific" levels. Precisely because such territorial aspirations based solely on historical precedence lack the necessary conviction when confronted with the existing situation, the Serbian Memorandum tries to back up "the historical rights" with "ethnographic rights", advancing the entirely false thesis of the "Albanization" of Slavs. It is not to be denied that this phenomenon of assimilation has been present in the formation of various nations and nationalities in the Balkans; but, again, the Albanians have been mainly in defensive positions - suffice it to mention the Albanian diaspora which, after the Turkish occupation, has eventually led to the gradual intermingling and blending of the Albanians with the neighbouring peoples.

In the closing part of the Memorandum, room has been left for what is called the "cultural mission" or, in other words, the "civilizing mission" of the Serbs towards the Albanians. The essence of the reasoning is this: since the Serbs are a nation more advanced from every viewpoint, they have one more reason to take the Albanians under their rule. This has been put in the form of a principle as "the right of a more cultured nation to perform a cultural mission towards less cultured peoples, by taking them under their rule." It is clear that the government circles in Belgrade are openly expressing their tendency to follow in the footsteps of the Great Powers of the time, which have tried to cover up their expansionist, oppressive, and colonizing policy with phrases about "the civilizing mission" of the more advanced European nations towards the "indigenous" populations of colonies. These phrases have been frequently used to hide not only the exploitation but even the mass extermination of local populations and other highly developed cultures. In the Serbian Memorandum this kind of "argument" sounds especially cynical, because the entire document is pervaded by a profoundly anti-Albanian racist spirit, a thing which exposes clearly the meaning of the "cultural mission" of the Serbian Government.

The territorial claims to the north and northeast territories of Albania presented at the London Conference can be summed up as follows: a) *Serbia* wanted the eastern border to run from Lake Ohër along the Drini i Zi to the Driti i Bardhe, which would mean that the Albanian regions of Dukagjin Plateau and Kosova, as well as the territory inhabited by an Albanian majority in the western part of Macedonia, would remain outside the borders of Albania; b) *Montenegro*, besides insisting on taking Shkodra with the surrounding regions, nurtured the hope that it would push the borderline with Albania down to the Mat River or at least to the point where the Drin discharges into the Adriatic Sea.

On January 2, 1913, the Provisional Government of Vlora also presented a Memorandum to the London Conference. (8) The Memorandum was devoted mainly to the question of Albanian borders, stating and arguing the Albanian stand. Its general characteristic is its moderation, both in regard to the delimitation of borders and the prospect of development of relations between the future Albania and the neighbouring states. Although historical considerations are not lacking here, either, the main emphasis in support of territorial demands



is placed on the ethnic criterion. The addendum which was presented to the Conference by the delegation of the Government of Vlora on January 25, 1913, also, confirms this. Application of the ethnic criterion is also cited as a condition for achieving peace and stability in the Balkans. The Memorandum points out, "To place the territories in which the Albanian population comprises the majority under foreign yoke means to perpetuate the seed of discord and disturbances" on the Peninsula. However, it must be admitted that in the Memorandum of the Government of Vlora the borders claimed undoubtedly constituted the maximum variant of the territorial program of the Albanian National Movement. These claims were excessive.

The possibility cannot be ruled out that various groups of big landowners who wanted to save their estates by including them within the borders of the Albanian state influenced the compiling of these claims. Undoubtedly the tradition of four vilayets which had figured for decades in the program of the Albanian National Movement, especially since the Eastern Crisis, also, played a certain role in the formulation of these demands. However, it is also possible that the Government of Vlora included in its border variant some foreign centres both in the north and south, anticipating the claims of neighbouring states, thus, it hoped to create a sufficient margin for the inevitable concessions and compromises in view of the bargaining over the borders, which was expected to continue at the Conference and outside it.

3. The discussion in principle at the first sessions of the London Conference quickly gave way to bargaining over the concrete delimitation of borders. From this stand-point the Conference conducted its work in two phases. The first phase was that of the border in the north and northeast. This was not only the most protracted period of the Ambassadors' discussions (from January to May), but also full of events, which indeed caused grave international complications.

Although there is no need to go into detail, it is necessary to point out certain moments of these talks in reaching an agreement amongst the Great Powers. Worthy of note is the proposal of the German ambassador, Lichnowski, who acted on behalf of the Tripartite Alliance when, on February 6, 1913, he presented what he called a compromise solution for the border of Albania with Montenegro and Serbia. (9) In this draft which had undoubtedly been worked out in Vienna, the backing-down of Austria-Hungary, especially its agreement to leave Kosova to Serbia, is clearly evident. It is known that the demands of the two Slav states were not limited to this; therefore, through the insistence of Russia especially, the question continued to be the object of further bargaining at a series of meetings of the Conference in February and March. Another important stage was that of the meeting of March 22, 1913, at which Austria-Hungary made another major concession by accepting that the Dukagjin Plateau (Gjakova), also, should be cut off the Albanian body. These two points constitute the essence of the agreement which was reached after 3 months of talks inside and outside the Conference on delineating the northern border on general lines. On April 10, the Conference adopted a special text which described the line of the border on the basis of the agreement of March 22. (10)

Thus, contrary to the principle of nationality and utterly disregarding the will of the local population, entire regions such as Kosova, the Dukagjin Plateau, and the Albanian territories in the western part of Macedonia were cut off from Albania. In regard to numbers, this comprised nearly half the Albanian population, which was condemned to change its bondage and pass from Ottoman to Serbo-Montenegrin rule.

In the document which they endorsed on March 22 the ambassadors recorded that "the settlement of the question of Gjakova" brought about "the extension of the agreement to the entire northern and northeastern border of Albania". Now the six Great Powers also agreed that the Albanian question "was not affected at all by the continuation of the war between Turkey and the (Balkan) allies" (the ceasefire at the beginning of December had broken down and fighting had recommenced in February). Therefore, they decided to order their representatives in Belgrade and Cetinje to demand that the Serbian and Montenegrin governments "put an end to



military operations in the territory left to Albania and rapidly complete their withdrawal from it."

However, the implementation of the agreement hit against a major obstacle. Cetinje not only did not lift the siege of Shkodra, but, having the aid of the Tsar's government (through the consul of Russia in Shkodra), reached an agreement with Esad Toptani (commander of the garrison of Shkodra and a renegade from the Albanian cause) for the surrender of the city in return for a promise that he would have every assistance to become the ruler of the future Albania. On April 22, Montenegro took possession of the city, thus achieving through the treachery of the Pasha what it had been unable to do after months of bloody fighting. (11)

The question of Shkodra quickly grew into an acute problem which turned into an international crisis. Both the Conference and the chancelleries debated this issue for about six weeks. It had been dealt with directly in a whole series of sessions and bargains which lasted from the end of March to the beginning of May. There we find the collective steps of the six Great Powers with Cetinje to have the siege of Shkodra lifted and the refusal of Tsar Nicholas, the proposal for measures of compulsion against Montenegro (a naval demonstration) and the opposition of Russia to those measures, as well as the "surrender" of Shkodra; Vienna immediately responded with the threat to take unilateral measures, and the new co-ordinated pressures of the Great Powers finally led to Montenegro's withdrawal from Shkodra (the Shengjin Agreement of May 9, 1913). (12) It can be said that with this, in general, the examination of the question of Albania's northern and northeastern borders at the Ambassadors' Conference came to an end.

At the conclusion of the proceedings of the Ambassadors' Conference the deals of the Great Powers over the borders of Albania could be summed up more or less as follows. First of all, at no time did the Conference take account of the aspirations and interests of the Albanian people. The Great Powers used the Albanian territory as a token for barter in their attempts to reconcile the contradictions between themselves and to find a way out from the exorbitant territorial claims of the Balkan states. Suffice it to mention that the borders which were delineated *grosso modo* in London, included only half the Albanian territories totalling about 28 000 sq km and less than half the population with Albanian nationality - about 800 000 people, within the Albanian State. More than half the Albanians, if we include the population of the Albanian regions which were cut off by the decision of the Congress of Berlin of 1878, were left outside the borders of Albania. Most of them passed under the rule of Serbia and Montenegro. Separated from the body of the homeland, these regions had been important centres of the national movement throughout the previous century and, on the eve of the proclamation of Independence, had made a decisive contribution to the armed struggle for the liberation of the country from the yoke of Turkey.

In this connection, two declarations of Edward Grey were very significant. The first he made in the house of Commons on April 7, 1913, after the agreement was reached on the northern and northeastern borders.

"The agreement between the Powers respecting the (northern) frontiers of Albania was reached after a long and laborious diplomatic effort", he said. "It was decided that the littoral and Scutari should be Albanian, while Ipek, Prizren, Dibra and (after much negotiation) and Gjakova should be excluded from Albania. This arrangement leaves a large tract of territory to be divided between Serbia and Montenegro, as the fruits of victory. The making of the agreement was essential for the peace of Europe and, in my opinion, it was accomplished just in time to preserve that peace between the Great Powers." (13)

After the conclusion of the Ambassadors' Conference, he gave this assessment also in the House of Commons on August 12, 1913:

"The difficulty of coming to an agreement about particular frontiers (of Albania) has been very great. Everyone will remember how difficult and how critical at some point were the



questions raised in connection with the settlement of the northern and northeastern frontiers of Albania. They were settled some time ago. We have now come to an agreement for the delimitation, under certain agreed conditions, of the southern and southeastern frontiers of Albania, which will complete the whole frontiers of this State. I am quite aware that, when the whole comes to be stated, it will be open on many points to a great deal of criticism from anyone with local knowledge, who looks at it purely on the merits of the locality itself. It is to be borne in mind that in making that agreement the primary essential was to preserve agreement between the Great Powers themselves, and if the agreement about Albania has secured that, it has done the work which is most essential in the interests of the peace of Europe." (14)

In this way the foreign minister of Britain, as the chairman of the Ambassadors' Conference, explicitly recognized the injustice of the settlement of the question of the borders of Albania and tried to justify it in the eyes of the public opinion by characterizing it as a necessary "sacrifice" on the altar of European peace. This did not stop the First World War from breaking out one year later.

4. After delineating the borders in principle, the London Conference decided to create two commissions to determine the borderline on the spot: one for the southern border, and the other for the northern and northeastern border.

The commission for the southern border completed its work in December 1913 by adopting "the Protocol of Florence" on the border between Albania and Greece. Meanwhile, in the work of the commission for the northern and northeastern border great difficulties arose and caused serious international complications. From the outset, it was apparent that the Serbian Government did not want to withdraw its troops from the territories which it had held in the north, and had decided to increase its territorial gains in Northern Albania. Apart from Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau which were left to it under the decision of the London Conference, Belgrade hoped to make its occupation of other territories in the north beyond the line of the border set in London an accomplished fact.

An exceptionally tense situation was created over the northern and northeastern border. There the interests of two Great Powers collided, because the Serbian Government had the complete support of Tsarist Russia, while Austria-Hungary was a stubborn opponent of the expansion of the Slav states, in this case to the detriment of the Albanian territories.

But here another factor came into play: the opposition of the Albanian population. The Serbian Government was becoming even more arrogant, undoubtedly encouraged by the fact that the Great Powers which had taken the decisions at the London Conference were no longer finding a common language either for collective steps in Belgrade or for concrete measures to ensure the enforcement of their decision.

This explains why the government in Belgrade, as far as September 1913, stubbornly continued to hold the Albanian territories. At this point the patience of the local population came to an end. Driven to desperation by the regime of terror and the countless crimes of the Serbian authorities on both sides of the border (both in the territories given to Serbia and those on the other side of the line drawn by the Great Powers), the Albanian population could see no other road but to take up arms as a last resort; thus, in the last week of September 1913, a powerful uprising against the Serbian occupiers broke out. The Serbian military forces were caught unprepared. At first, the insurgents achieved some sensational results; such important centres as Dibra, Struga and Ohri fell into their hands, and they marched on Tetova and Gostivar and, going further north, attacked Gjakova and Prizren.

The anti-Serbian uprising of September-October 1913, was not only an expression of the resistance of the Albanian population to the savage policy of oppression imposed by the new occupiers, but also a proof of the mass opposition to the decisions of the Great Powers which gave these regions to Serbia, contrary to the ethnic principle.

As could be expected, the Serbian authorities quickly took measures and suppressed the



uprising within a few days. Moreover, they drew from this a two fold gain: first, in order to justify a further tightening of the regime of terror against the Albanian population in the regions which were left to Serbia; second, in order to justify and further extend the occupation of the zone in Northern Albania which had been held by them arbitrarily. Belgrade did not hesitate to pour accusations on the Provisional Government of Vlora about inciting and supporting the uprising, while it was known that the Government of Vlora was no more than an embryo of a state which had neither the possibility nor the means to undertake any such action. This was what Serbia needed in order to support its thesis that the territories it was holding in the north were a necessary measure to prevent an imaginary attack which might come from Albania.

The question turned into an international crisis (like that of Shkodra a few months earlier), when Austro-Hungary intervened in mid-October 1913 and issued an ultimatum to Serbia, demanding that it remove its troops within 8 days beyond the border established by the Great Powers. (15) After several meetings of the prime minister, Pasic, with the Russian ambassador to Belgrade, Hartwig, who advised "moderation", the government of Serbia decided to withdraw its troops within the time-limit set in the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum.

These were the circumstances in which the commission for the delimitation of Albania's north and northeast borders performed its task. Faced with many difficulties raised by the Serbian side, it was unable to carry out its task either in the first phase (September - December 1913), because of the arrival of the winter, or in the second phase (April - July 1914), when it was obliged to interrupt its work because of the outbreak of the First World War.

5. During the First World War, the Great Powers trampled on the decisions they had taken a year earlier, and Albania, although it was proclaimed "neutral", was turned into a battlefield. It suffered several occupations. Initially Serbia occupied it and, after its defeat, the Albanian territory was divided into three zones of occupation: Austria-Hungary in the north, Italy in the south, and France in the east.

Meanwhile the 1913 decisions were violated not only on the military but also on the diplomatic plane. In April 1915, the Entente Powers signed a secret treaty with Italy (the London Treaty) which "rewarded" Italy for its entry into the war against Germany and Austria-Hungary by promising it a part of Albania, while the remainder was kept as a reserve to be shared eventually between Serbia and Greece.

At the end of the First World War the shadow of the London Treaty hung over the fate of Albania at the Peace Conference, while contradictions appeared even before its implementation. New schemes were drawn up in the lobbies of the Conference, either to place Albania under some sort of dependence (mandate, protectorate), or to further partition its territory. Attempts were made at proclaiming the decisions of 1913 invalid and raising again the Albanian question, including that of its borders.

These schemes and attempts aroused a powerful reaction among the broad masses of the Albanian people. In January 1920, a national congress, convened in the town of Lushnja (the Congress of Lushnja), solemnly declared that the Albanians would not accept any form of dependence on anyone and that they were resolute in their demand for an independent and sovereign Albanian state. (16) In June that same year, the people's forces scored a stunning victory over the Italian troops stationed in Vlora and the surrounding district (the War of Vlora).

Encouraged by these two events, the national government formed at the Congress of Lushnja demanded the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territories which were left to Albania since 1913. Through an agreement signed at the beginning of August 1920, Italy consented to evacuate Vlora. (17) But the efforts for the unification of the territories of 1913 under the central power of the Albanian Government encountered a new obstacle in the north. There the Serbian troops held what they called "the strategic line". The dispute was over a very large zone extending from Lake Oher to Lake Shkodra, nearly 1/6 of the Albanian territory with



a population of about 150 000, (18) which the government in Belgrade did not want to give up, claiming that at the time of armistice the allied powers had recognized its rights to hold this zone for "military needs". Thus, a serious threat of a new partitioning of Albanian territory arose again in the north. It took another broad mobilization of the forces of the nation to frustrate the annexationist ambitions of Belgrade. The pressure of international opinion expressed especially through the League of Nations did the rest, and in autumn 1924 the Yugoslav forces withdrew beyond the 1921 border.

Precisely in these circumstances, in November 1921 the Great Powers, which had emerged victorious in the first World War, through a new edition of the Ambassadors' Conference, re-endorsed the decisions of 1913 in regard to the independence of Albania and its borders with the neighbouring states. (19)

Although compelled to put aside their "grand plans" for the partitioning of the Albanian territory, leading circles in Belgrade persisted in their demand for "rectifications" on the border line. Thus, they wanted to benefit from the fact that the defining of the borders on the spot not been completed before the war, and a new border commission, with the participation of Italy, France and Great Britain, was charged with this task in March 1922. For several years the question underwent a series of examinations and re-examinations at various international levels which on each occasion accepted the validity of the Albanian thesis of the inviolability of borders. However the Yugoslav government eventually managed to achieve through transactions what it was unable to do through legal means. It secured two "rectifications": one in the zone of Vermosh, taking an area of forests, and another, even more important, on Lake Ohri, taking over part of its shores, including the famous beauty spot of Shen Naum. This was the object of a secret agreement signed in summer of 1924 between the Yugoslav Government and the main representative of feudal reaction, Ahmet Zog, who had been given refuge in Yugoslavia after his departure from Albania as a result of the triumph of the uprising which brought a democratic government to power in June 1924. Ahmet Zog secured the open intervention of the Yugoslav armed forces to restore him to power in December 1924, and to this end, he undertook to accept the demands of Belgrade for the "rectification" of the borderline. The agreement was consummated in the summer of 1925 in the "official talks" between the government of Belgrade and that of Ahmet Zog, "was taken notice of" by the Ambassadors' Conference, (20) and was finally established in the Border Protocol between Albania and Yugoslavia signed in Florence in July 1926. (21)



## NOTES

\* This question has been dealt with more extensively in Arben Puto, *Albanian Independence and the Diplomacy of the Great Powers 1912-1914*, Tirana 1978, and volume 2 of his publication *The Albanian Question in the International Acts of the Period of Imperialism, 1912-1918*, Tirana 1987.

1 *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, (DDF), 3ème série, t. VI, f. no. 78, pp. 94-96.

2 A small port in Northern Albania also known as San Giovanni di Medua.

3 DDF, 3ème série, the above document.

4 *Osterreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der Boznischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914* (OUA), Wien und Leipzig 1930, f.no. 4957.

5 E. C. Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913*, Cambridge, Jaw USA, 1938, p. 254.

6 D. Lukac, *Dokumenti o spolnoj politici Srbije 1913*, CBI, ss. 137-138.

7 The biggest city of North Albania.

8 A. Puto, *The Albanian Question in the International Acts in the Period of Imperialism*, vol. 2 (1912-1918) (also published in French), Tirana 1987, d.no. 3, pp. 192-196.

9 Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (AMAE), Correspondence politique, Turquie, Guerres balkaniques, Conférence de Londres, I, fos. 62-64.

10 DDF, 3ème série, t.VI, d.no. 256, p. 312.

11 See A. Puto, *Albanian Independence and the Diplomacy of the Great Powers, 1912-1913*, (also published in French, 1982), Tirana 1978, pp. 205-216.

12 *Trattati e convenzioni fra il Regno d'Italia e gli altri Stati*, v. 22, Roma 1930, PP. 336-339.

13 J. Swire, *Albania - the Rise of a Kingdom*, London 1929, pp. 151-152.

14 *Ibidem*, p. 152.

15 DDF, 3ème série, t. VIII, d. no. 341, pp. 429-431.

16 The text is in French in A. Simonard, *Essai sur l'indépendance Albanaise*, Paris 1942, pp. 341-342.

17 Copy of the agreement in French in the Central State Archives, f. 251, 1920, file 35, pp. 161-163.

18 According to J. Swire, *op.cit.*, pp. 345-346.

19 Decision of the Ambassadors' Conference, Nov. 9, 1921, in A. Simmonard, *op.cit.* pp. 381-393.

20 See A. Simonard, *op.cit.* pp. 404-405.

21 Commission Internationale de délimitation des frontières de l'Albanie. Frontière Serbo-Croato-Slovene-Albanaise. Protocole de delimitation. Florence 1926, pp. 6-11.



DIMITRIJE TUCOVIC  
(Belgrade-Yugoslavia)

## THE COLONIAL WARS (\*)

... The Serbian Government..., without taking account of the natural resistance of the Albanian tribes, in reality provoked this resistance by declaring the Albanians - following the example of all invaders - a bastard people towards which only brute force could be used. Following its unexpected military successes with Turkey, it seemed as though the whole bourgeois world of Serbia was overcome by a fanatical faith in its *force of arms* as a radical and decisive state. It set its army on its course towards the coast, without any kind of political guidance, occupied the bulk of the Albanian territory, without issuing any strict orders about the behaviour of the army with the proud Albanian tribes, and, in this way, kindled the first spark of the continuous war on the border, which, claimed numerous victims on both sides. It never occurred to the official political representatives to consider how many victims could have been saved if they had taken care about the behaviour of the army towards the captured population, if they had borne in mind the powerful and unrestrainable desire of these tribes to prevent the worsening of their already difficult living conditions, and if they had not arrogantly violated the Albanian customs.

And as soon as the army - left to act at will and behind which the political leaders hid themselves - came in contact with the Albanian people, it caused such devastation and drove them into a desperate fight for existence. So began the *series of colonial wars* which, with long or short interruptions, have continued from the time the Serbian army crossed the border to this day, and the end is not within sight yet.

The bourgeois press, blind and deaf towards the policy of the most brutal colonial annihilation, which the army carried out, set up a friendship clamour about the "Albanian savagery", a clamour which increased in proportion with the weakness of the Government to cope with the pressure of the powerful rivals in connection with Albania. Of course, not even the primitive savage tribes of Africa have ever welcomed the European ruler by kissing his white hands. Even less could this be hoped from the Albanians who already were inspired with some political ideals for which they have made so many sacrifices during the last ten years, and this should have been taken into account by anyone who had not decided in advance to wage a war of annihilation.

The Albanian uprising in the month of September (1913 - ed.), because of which Serbia was obliged to remobilize about three divisions, is a classical example of what causes colonial wars. The occupation of the Serbian army extended from the east to the mountain gorges and passes. It kept the farmer from his field, the livestock from the pastures, the herds from the valleys, the village from the mill, the buyer and seller from the market, the district from the city, and all the mountain regions from their economic centre and the stores of food. The Albanians on that side could not cross over to the land which was on this side. All his resources of life were cut off. The people, weary and hungry, first of all, begged to be allowed to go freely to the market, but when this, too, was denied them, they were left no recourse besides death from hunger or a bullet. And they chose the latter. Various foreign and internal agents have tried to meddle in this uprising and the Government has always tried to draw public attention to this, but the climate for the eventual influence of these elements was prepared by the Government of Mr. Pasic, which alienated the Albanian population using the same means it might very well have used to ease the situation and win to its side.



The military regime not only prevented the people from working and cut off all the usual sources of profits, but it also *plundered* them of all their reserves of food for themselves and the livestock. Following the mediaeval system of supplying the troops with just enough to keep them from dying of hunger, they let the local people do so...

And when the uprising broke out, the Government declared through the representative of the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the Albanians would be punished in an "exemplary way", the bourgeois press demanded their merciless extermination, and the army carried it out. The Albanian villages, from where the males had long since departed, were put to the torch. At the same time, these became barbarous crematoria in which hundreds of women and infants burned alive. When the insurgents captured Serbian officers and soldiers they merely disarmed them and released them straight away, while the Serbian army did not spare even women, children or the sick. The true picture of these barbarities can be seen in the descriptions from Albania in *Radnicke novine* in the articles *Gjakmarrja e soldateskes dhe terbimi malazez* (The vengeance of the soldiers and the Montenegrin fury). Thus, once again it has been proved that *the popular insurrection of more primitive tribes is always more humanitarian than the practice of the regular army which the modern state uses against the insurrection*. The Serbian occupiers have opened their record of colonial murders and atrocities and now think that with dignity they will join the British, the Dutch, the French, the Germans, the Italians and the Russians in their association of occupiers !

#### NOTES

\* Excerpts from the book *Serbia and Albania*, Prishtina 1968. D. Tucovic (1881-1914) was one of the main leaders of the Serbian Social-Democratic Party. *Serbia and Albania* is his most important work.



## DOCUMENTS

*Istanbul (Pera), May 30, 1878*

APPEAL OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE RIGHTS OF THE ALBANIAN NATIONALITY ADDRESSED TO ALL PATRIOTS TO DEFEND THE ALBANIAN LANDS WHICH ARE THREATENED WITH ANNEXATION BY MONTENEGRO. THE COMMITTEE DEMANDS THAT THE ALBANIANS SHOULD BE LEFT TO THEIR LANDS (\*)

To all Albanian patriots,

Through the press and local committees, we have distributed your protest against the pretensions of the Greek Government towards Southern Albania, or Epirus, which is a component part of our country like Central and Northern Albania.

This document, published by the will of all of you and signed by your leaders and gentry, is a majestic expression of your ardent loyalty to our Homeland which is one and indivisible.

But while attempts to occupy Southern Albania have failed, because your chiefs refused to collaborate with the Greek volunteers and the inhabitants of Epirus put up a general resistance, (1) another foreign onslaught has occurred in Northern Albania.

It is known that the Albanians maintained complete neutrality in the war between the Turks and the Montenegrins as far as this was compatible with their duty towards the Sublime Porte. For this reason you would have been surprised to learn that Montenegro (which had gone to war with the sole aim of liberating its brothers of Hercegovina and Bosnia, as its Prince had solemnly declared), on the contrary, assailed the ports and districts of Northern Albania.

Thinking that this occupation had been caused by military reasons, we hoped that that it would end at the same time as the war and would not in any way violate our national rights. Regrettably, the Montenegrin Government was lured by the ambition of permanent possession of the occupied territory, as well as that of autonomous clans which it did not have the power to occupy and which no one had the right to hand over to it. Indeed, it has now begun to treat the Albanians as if they had become its subjects. Some Montenegrin chiefs continue to commit all sorts of violent acts and robberies in our country and do other evil things every day.

Such an aggressive and violent conduct, which does not have even the slightest provocation on our part to justify it, is arousing profound and general anger amongst us. We are afraid that bloody clashes will occur between the Montenegrin troops and the population of the occupied zones, and all over Albania the cry has been raised: "We must rush to the assistance of our brothers who are being subjected to violence and plunder!"

The Central Committee considers it urgent that a war between two peoples who, unfortunately, have had the opportunity to measure their strength and bravery, should be stopped and, in this way, avoid new dangers to peace in the East.

The Central Committee will make every effort to defend the rights of Albanian nationality in Northern Albania before European public opinion and diplomacy as it has done already for the same reasons in Epirus. It will intervene strongly with the Sublime Porte and the Governments of the Great Powers in the hope that they will persuade the Montenegrin Government to give up its unjust and dangerous efforts.

Meanwhile, the Committee considers it its duty to appeal to leaders and the gentry and to



all Albanian patriots to do everything in their power to restrain the impatience of their brothers which, in fact, is justified.

We, with our whole hearts, desire to live in peace with all our neighbours, Montenegro and Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. We do not want and do not demand anything from them, but we are absolutely determined to hold on what is ours. Leave the Albanian lands to Albanians !

Pera-Istanbul, May 18,30, 1878

The Central Committee for the Defence  
of the Rights of the Albanian Nationality

(signatures follow) (2)

CAH of the RA, Fund of the Albanian League of Prizren, file no.2, doc. no.5523. G.Schiro, *Gli albanesi e la questione balcanica*, Napoli 1904, pp. 48-49. K.Fraseri, *The Albanian National Renaissance* (album), Tirana 1962, p.18. Translated from the original in Italian.

#### NOTES

\* Taken from *Acts of the Albanian National Renaissance, 1878-1912*, prepared by S. Pollo and S. Pulaha, Tirana 1978, pp. 18-19.

1 This refers to the landing of Greek andart bands at Lekures in the vicinity of Saranda, on the 27th of February 1878, and their attempt to raise the local population in rebellion. By this act, the Greek Government sought to justify and accomplish its objectives for the annexation of the Albanian territories when the Russo-Turkish War was nearing its end. Within a few days the local forces dealt with this attempt.

2 This proclamation is published as a leaflet in Albanian and Italian. The Italian variant is generally more complete. The names of the signatories of the act do not figure in both variants. See copy at the CAH of the Republic of Albania.



*Shkodra, May 8, 1878*

PROTEST OF THE POPULATION OF SHKODRA, PODGORICA, SHPUZA,  
ZHABJAK, TIVAR, ULQIN, GRUDA, KERMEND, HOT AND KASTRAT  
ADDRESSED TO THE AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE IN ISTANBUL  
AGAINST THE ANNEXATION OF ALBANIAN LANDS BY MONTENEGRO (\*)

We, the undersigned, representatives of the population of the districts of Podgorica, Shpuza, Zhabjak, Tivar, Ulqin, the regions of Gruda (Highlands), Kermend, Hot and Kastrat of the district of Shkodra, have the honour to address Your Excellency who represents the French Republic in Istanbul to present the following:

Our Montenegrin neighbours, (1) through continual attacks against our towns, have compelled us to live for centuries in a state of permanent defence and, through their savage actions, have deprived us of any kind of security.

We, Catholics and Moslems, brothers for centuries, who live in a community of interests and customs, have always been united to resist acts of banditry and shed torrents of blood to defend our towns and villages.

However, today, we learned from the newspapers that the Ottoman Government, unable to resist the pressure of Russia, has been obliged to accept our annexation by the Montenegrins...

It is true that, amongst us, there is a small minority of Slavs who belong to the regions of Podgorica and Tivar, while 9/10 of our population are Moslems or Catholics; apart from this fact between us and the Montenegrins, there is no link from a religious stand-point and the great bulk of us are Albanian both in religion and language.

Until recently, our towns and villages, plains and fields enjoyed peace. Disregarding the conditions of the ceasefire and disdaining all the laws of peace, humanitarianism and civilization, the Montenegrins have poured into our lands and olive groves, plundered property worth 100 000 lira, mistreated our priest whom they imprisoned later, burned our temples, compelled all our compatriots from 15 to 70 years of age to perform compulsory military service, facts unheard of in the history of civilized peoples, and even have gone so far as to drag our wives on to the battlefield. In this way Montenegro has once again justified its reputation for savagery. (2)

Can the French Republic accept that developed countries can be transformed into a broad field of ruins and devastated, that the civilized population should be placed under the yoke of barbarian hordes, and that a nationality should be condemned to perpetual oppression?

We have ... preserved our customs and religion, our language and nationality for five centuries; therefore, we protest to the Great Powers against the annexation of our country by Montenegro.

If Europe... wishes to help us enjoy a higher level of civilization than that we have had hitherto, and has the desire to guarantee our progress and security, how can it permit our annexation by /another/ country...?

Montenegro did not occupy our country by means of arms, but burst in only by means of brigandage; in these conditions, according to the laws of civilized nations, the withdrawal of these bands from our country should be demanded. However, in the name of what justice has it been decided that even larger territories than those occupied by it should be annexed to Montenegro?

In brief we see the danger which threatens us; rather than die enslaved and humiliated



tomorrow, we prefer to be wiped out today, while defending our honour and freedom. Therefore, we have decided to refuse to accept enslavement by Montenegro.

If our moral and material progress and salvation worry Europe, we are ready to suffer all the sacrifices imposed on us in this direction ...

We hope that Your Excellency will have the kindness to present this appeal to the French Government before the Congress meets ...

Deputy of Shkodra of Albania  
and general delegate  
Zijaeldin Jusuf (seal)

Delegate of the population  
of Podgorica  
Mehmet Tahir (seal)

Delegate of Ulqin  
... (seal)

Delegate of the Highlands  
AM.Z. (seal)

Delegates of Tivar  
Pashko and the brothers Deda

Terapi (Istanbul), May 8, 1878

*AMAE, CPC, French Embassy at the Sublime Porte, Turkey, vol. 417, p. 51r-54v; supplement to the report no. 96. Translated from the French original.*

#### NOTES

\* Taken from *Pages of the Albanian National Renaissance, 1878-1912*, prepared by S. Pollo and S. Pulaha, Tirana 1978, pp. 12-13.

1 Reference is to the government and ruling circles of Montenegro.

2 Reference is to the operations of the Montenegrin army.



Prishtina, June 26, 1878

PROTEST OF 6 200 ALBANIAN EMIGRANTS EXPELLED FROM  
THE KAZAS OF NIS, LESKOVAC, PROKUPLJE AND KURSHUMLIA  
ADDRESSED TO THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN AGAINST THE MASS MURDERS  
AND RAPES COMMITTED BY THE SERBIAN AND BULGARIAN ARMIES (\*)

We, the undersigned, emigrants from the *kazas* of Nis, Leskovac, Urkup (Prokuplje) and Kurshumli, residing for the time being in the *kazas* of Prizren, inform the plenipotentiary representatives at the Congress (of Berlin) that, being forced to emigrate last year because of the coming of the enemy, apart from losing our homes, during our departure we lost all our possessions to the value of several millions, which were stolen from us, and that in those *kazas* the wives of more than 1 200 men, who were soldiers, and some of the widows were taken prisoner and robbed of their belongings in this winter seasons. The Bulgarians, who waylaid us, killed more than 2 000 men and children and, since the normal road was blocked by the Bulgarians, circling round the mountains, we arrived at Vranja, Prishtina, and from there, at Gjilan after losing more than 2 000 others because of the terrible cold. The enemy, after selecting some women from 1 300 families, which could not get away, raped them before the eyes of their husbands and brothers, and then killed them in the midst of their sufferings. Twenty-eight men and two children who could not tolerate these atrocities and wanted to oppose these actions, were shot at Leskovac. Those that had stayed behind, because they had been prevented from leaving, were induced to sell their possessions on the pretext that they would be allowed to leave, but then they were forced to pay levies of 100 grosh to 100 zekins and were reduced to the greatest poverty, and left homeless..., their houses were given to others, while they were left in uninhabitable places. In the end, the unprecedented injustices and damage we have suffered, oblige us to present our misfortunes... to the European powers.

Prishtina on 14-26 June 1294/1878

The representatives of 3 000 refugees from Leskovac: Ibrahim, Etem, Emrullah.

The representatives of 1 000 refugees from Nis : Ismail, Sulejman.

The representatives of 1 200 refugees from Urkup: Ali, Shaqir.

The representatives of 1000 refugees from Kurshumli: Ismail, Abdurrahman, Osman.

*PAAA, Turkey 129, vol.2, The Acts of the Congress of Berlin 2, 1878, doc. no.110 (telegram).*

NOTE

\* Taken from *The Albanian League of Prizren, 1878-1881*, Documents I, prepared by S.Pollo and S. Pulaha, Tirana 1978, pp. 73-74.



ABOUT THE REFUGEES FROM TOPLITZA AND VRANJA (\*) ( 1878 )

**Mr. Goulde to the Marquis of Salisbury**

(Received December 2.)

Belgrade, November 26, 1878

My Lord,

I HEAR that the Servian Government has behaved with great and unnecessary harshness, not to say cruelty, towards the Albanians in the recently ceded districts. If my information is correct, and I have every reason to believe it to be so, the peaceful and industrious inhabitants of over a 100 Albanian villages in the Toplitza and Vranja valleys were ruthlessly driven forth from their homesteads by the Servians in the early part of the year. These wretched people have ever since been wandering about in a starving condition in the wild country beyond the new Servian frontier. They have not been allowed to gather in their crops on their own lands, which were reaped by the Servian soldiery, although repeatedly they have sent deputations and addressed numerous petitions to the Servian Government, humbly offering their submission, and promising to become loyal subjects of Prince Milan. Every time they sought to recross the Servian line of outposts they were shot down, and in some instances out of sheer desperation they have had recourse to retaliatory measures, which have cost the Servian rather dear. When I last had the pleasure of meeting M. Ristich I casually stated to his Excellency that these facts had come to my knowledge, and that should they be confirmed I felt certain Her Majesty's Government and the majority of the Great Powers would call the Servian Government to account, and insist upon strict justice being done to these unfortunate people, whose only crime was their belonging to an alien race and another creed. His Excellency professed to be only partially acquainted with the facts of the case, and to be desirous to take the matter into early and serious consideration.

I have, etc.

(Signed) G.F.GOULD

(The British Museum, London, *Accounts and Papers* (38). 1878 - 9. LXXIX.79,574-575).

NOTE

\* Taken from *The Albanian League of Prizren in the English documents, 1878-1881*, prepared by Skender Rizaj, Prishtina 1978, pp. 106-107.



Dibra, November 1, 1878

DECISION OF THE BRANCH OF THE ALBANIAN LEAGUE OF DIBRA  
AND THE LEAGUE OF TOSKERIA REPRESENTED BY ABDYL FRASHERI  
TO DEMAND FROM THE OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION  
OF ALBANIA AS AN AUTONOMOUS VILAYET (\*)

During the talks held between us and Abdyl Bey, who has come to our League these days as representative of the League of Toskeria, we examined the dangers which have emerged at present and will emerge in the future for our Homeland, i.e. Albania, as a result of the misfortunes which our state suffered in Rumelia. The decision which was taken (on this occasion) about the future security of Rumelia of the Ottoman Empire - our place of refuge, and about avoiding the potential threat to Albania, comprises the following points:

*First:* The unification of the above-mentioned Albania in one vilayet, the allocation as a centre (of the vilayet) of a city which lies close to and has communications with all its regions;

*second :* all the officials who will be in Albania must know the language of the country;

*third :* education must be extended and the Albanian language, too, must be taught in schools;

*fourth :* the decisions about the reforms useful for the state and the nation by the General Assembly, which will meet for four months each year in the centre of the vilayet, must be applied;

*fifth :* from the total revenue of the vilayet, a sufficient amount must be put aside to be spent for the progress of education, as well as for public buildings.

In order to present to the supreme instances of the Empire these five points which would ensure our future material and moral progress and happiness, and in order to receive the highest approval (of the government), it was decided to send to Istanbul, within this month, at the most, four Muslims and one Christian, a total of five persons from the prominent men of the region of Gegeria. It was decided also that the whole of Albania should entreat the acceptance by the Empire of the five points presented above, and that the documents certifying that the above-mentioned persons are recommended, after receiving the seal of the *kaza* or *sandjak*, taking as a basis the (first) copy which has been compiled (for this purpose), should be handed very quickly to the above-mentioned representatives. Until (the fulfilment) of the above-mentioned demands is achieved, Albania will (continue) to put up resistance, linked together and united to a man ...

BVA, *Sadaret hususi maruzati*, tarih : 5 zilkade 1295.

NOTE

\* Taken from *Acts of the Albanian National Renaissance 1878-1912*, prepared by S. Pollo and S. Pulaha, Tirana 1978, pp. 69-70.



THE ACTIVITY OF THE ALBANIAN LEAGUE OF PRIZREN  
IN THE VILAYET OF KOSOVA (1880) (\*)

Consul-General Blunt to the Marquis of Salisbury

(Received May 19)

Salonica, May 10, 1880.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a Report, with one inclosure, which Mr. Assistant Alvarez has addressed to me upon the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Kosova.

I have, etc.

(Signed) J.E.BLUNT.

Inclosure

*Mr. Alvarez to Consul-General Blunt.*

(Extract.)

Salonica, May 10, 1880.

I AVAILED myself of my recent stay at Prishtina and Uskub to obtain information as to the general state of affairs in that province.

...In my first interview with the Vali of Kossova, his Excellency, referring to the muhajirs or Mussulman refugees from Kurschumli, Orcub, and other places situated in the territory recently acquired by Servia in virtue of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, stated that at present they constituted the chief difficulty with which he had to deal. Their number, which he estimated at from 90,000 to 100,000, and insubordinate disposition gave him great uneasiness, and rendered the task of keeping them in order extremely difficult. He commented on their disinclination to work, which he attributes partly to the despair in which they have been plunged by the loss of all they possess, and complained of the increase since their arrival in the average number of crimes, such as robberies of cows, sheep, and grain, to which their destitute condition has driven them. Outrages having been reported to have been committed by them on Christians of the province, I made inquiries, and found that one of the reported cases had been grossly exaggerated, and that another was a pure invention. I inclose a translated copy of a telegram referring thereto. Such is the misery to which they are subjected, and so great is their hunger, that on the arrival of the rations of barley, etc. supplied them by the Government, and for which they eagerly wait in large numbers at the railway stations, the grain is devoured raw!...

In a visit I paid Khairuddin Bey, the Mufti, who is well disposed towards the Christians, he gave the number of the muhajirs as 70,000, of whom from 40,000 to 50,000 were in the Sandjak of Pristina, and from 21,000 to 25,000 in the vicinity of the capital. I have reason to



believe that the Mufti's estimate is near the truth, and I received trustworthy information that their real number was from 50,000 to 65,000, more than half of whom were to be found in the Sandjak of Pristina...

The Albanian League has, curiously enough, succeeded in establishing a better feeling between the Mussulmans and Christians of North Albania. An instance of this occurred in the kaza of Vucotrin about three weeks ago. Some Musullman Albanian refugees attacked some Christians of that town and carried off their cattle. As the authorities took no notice whatsoever of this crime, the League, which has a branch Committee at Vucotrin possessing far more power and influence than the Kaimakam there, who, politically speaking, in an absolute nonentity, demanded why the robbers had not been punished, threatening to take the law into its own hands were no punishment inflicted on the offenders. This threat was effectual and justice was done.

Latterly the Mahommedan community of Pristina has shown tendencies towards an education development. There are already several schools in the town, and to these will be added this August two new and improved ones with masters brought from Constantinople.

(Public Record Office, London, *F.O. 195/1323*; The British Museum, London, *Accounts and Papers* (43). 1880. LXXXII. 82, 77 - 78).

#### NOTE

\* Taken from The Albanian League of Prizren in British Documents, 1878-1881, prepared by Skender Rizaj. Prishtina 1987, pp. 279-280.



GOSCHEN TO GRANVILLE (\*)

... Amongst other questions, it will have to be settled how the provinces inhabited by Albanians should be dealt with, a question which must be considered both from the point of view of general politics and from the point of view of local wants.

The situation is complicated by the manner in which the fate of part of the inhabitants of Albanian territory has become involved in the pending cessions of territory to Montenegro, and also by the excitement produced among the Albanians by the proposed cession of Janina district and other points claimed by the Albanians as being inhabited by men of their race, to Greece; and if I have delayed addressing your Lordship of the general subject of the future of the Albanian territory which will remain to Turkey, it has been in the hope of seeing some light as to settlement of the frontier disputes, and thus being better able to deal with the subject in all its bearings, both in reference to general politics and to the special wants of the districts in question.

The question as to the best mode of dealing with the Albanians of the Vilayet of Scutari (Shkodra - ed.), and especially of the Roman Catholic tribes, has been partially considered by Her Majesty's Government, on the initiative of Mr. Kirby Green, in connection with the cession of Dulcigno (Ulqin - ed.) to the Montenegrins.

...Whatever the history of the movement may be, I venture to submit to your Lordship, as I have done before, that the Albanian excitement cannot be passed over a mere manoeuvre conducted by the Turks in order to mislead Europe, and evade its will.

Nor can it be denied that the Albanian movement is perfectly natural. As ancient and distinct a race as any by whom they are surrounded, they have seen the nationality of these neighbouring races taken under the protection of various European Powers and gratified in their aspirations for a more independent existence. They have seen the Bulgarians completely emancipated in Bulgaria, and made masters in Eastern Roumelia. They have seen the ardent desire of Europe to liberate the territory inhabited by Greeks from Turkish rule. They have seen the Slavs in Montenegro protected by the great Slav Empire of the North with enthusiastic pertinacity. They see the Eastern question being solved on the principle of nationality, and the Balkan Peninsula being gradually divided, as it were, among various races on that principle. Meanwhile, they see that they themselves do not receive similar treatment. Their nationality is ignored, and territory inhabited by Albanians is handed over in the north to the Montenegrins, to satisfy the protege of Russia, and in the south to Greece, the protege of England and France.

Exchanges of territory are proposed, other difficulties arise, but it is still at the expense of Albanians, and Albanians are to be handed over to Slavs and Greeks without reference to the principle of nationality.

I am putting very roughly the case of the Albanians, in order to illustrate the natural character of their resistance to the will of Europe. It does not appear to me to be an artificial or even a blameworthy attitude. It is one which is the natural outcome of the general movement in the Balkan Peninsula ...

I have availed myself of the opportunity which has been offered me by the discussion of the plan to crush the resistance of the Albanians by threats seldom, if ever, used under such circumstances, to point out that, in my judgement, the Albanians do not deserve specially penal treatment, because, after all, in their attitude of resistance, and in their deep-rooted objection to a portion of their countrymen being handed over to an alien rule, they are simply acting on the same principles of nationality as have formed the basis of the recent treatment of the Eastern



question, and on which its further solution will probably be worked out.

Analogous considerations lead me to the conclusion, which I humbly venture to submit to your Lordship, that the Albanian nationality is an element which ought not to be overlooked in any future political combinations. On the contrary, I believe it may be utilized with much advantage to general interests, and accordingly I should deprecate any partial measures which would be likely to impede the formation of one large Albanian province.

If it is premature, or it is impossible, to construct such a province now, I would certainly abstain from any measures which would make the impossibility permanent, or would at least cause future difficulties. I would recommend that the formation of a united Albanian province should at least always be kept in view ...

...

If the foregoing reasoning be correct, your Lordship will see at once that another advantage would have been secured. If a strong Albania should be formed, the excuse for occupation by a foreign power in the case of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would be greatly weakened. A united Albania would bar the remaining entrances to the North, and the Balkan Peninsula would remain in the hands and under the sway of the races who now inhabit it. Otherwise, the Albanians might be an incurable difficulty at a time when troubles should arise. A population, in great part Mussulman, would be a source of the greatest difficulty to the Slav or Greek countries around it. A European Power alone would be strong enough to deal with them and to keep order. I consider that, in proportion as the Albanian nationality could be established, the probability of European intervention in the Balkan Peninsula would be diminished ...

#### NOTE

\* Taken from A. Puto, *The Albanian Question in International Acts of the Period of Imperialism*, vol. 1, Tirana 1984, pp. 228-234.



Shkodra, December 2, 1880

REPORT TO THE SUBLIME PORTE BY DERVISH PASHA FROM SHKODRA,  
IN WHICH HE DEALS WITH THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH  
THE ALBANIAN LEAGUE OF PRIZREN WAS FORMED AND  
ITS DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY AND PROPOSES THAT  
LARGE MILITARY FORCES SHOULD BE SENT TO ALBANIA (\*)

There is no need for telling that the territory of Albania is divided into two parts. One is Toskeria and the other is Gegeria. All the *kazas* and *nahijes*, which make up the Vilayet of Shkodra, as well as Elbasan, the Upper and Lower Dibra, Mat, Tetova and its Highlands, Prizren, Peja, Gjakova and Shkup, and the nahije of Luma of the Sandjak of Prizren, which are included in the Vilayets of Manastir and Kosova, are considered regions of Gegeria of Albania. The Sandjaks of Janina, Berat, Gjirokastra and the regions of Naselic, Kolonja and Kostur make up the regions of Toskeria.

His Majesty is well informed and understands what sort of people were those who founded the Albanian League in Gegeria of Albania some time ago, and who inflated the question of Gucia to such proportions that it culminated eventually in the events of Tuz. It is also well known what propaganda and incitement preceded the emergence, in essence, of the idea of this League and to what point all this was to the advantage or disadvantage of the Imperial Government. The idea of founding the League, which emerged in the regions of Gegeria, and the propaganda conducted through all sorts of intrigues and lies by those who tried to implement this idea, assumed very great importance on the place of the internal and external policy. Those who expected this League to serve the interests of the Empire, seeing the disastrous events provoked successively by the men of this League, understood the futility of their hopes and expectations. It is clear that the idea of the League, which was born in this manner in Albania would not have been futile, had it been based on obedience and submission, (1) and had it been in conformity with the desires and interests of the Government. It is also clear that we would have profited a great deal from it, if the men of the League had not acted on their own and according to their personal interests, if they had submitted to and complied with the orders and the measures of the Imperial Government to guarantee peace and the happiness of the population within the country and to prevent incitements from outside.

However, as is known, the founders of the Albanian League had evil aims (2) in mind when they came out with this idea in Albania. They deepened the discord already sown by the foreigners on the imperial territories, in general, and in Albania, in particular. As a consequence, the chiefs of the League refused obedience and submission, anarchy set in and, as a foretaste of things to come, the men of their circle murdered a marshal (3) of the Empire at Gjakova. From that moment, it was clear that the League would be against the empire. had it been possible to take the necessary measures immediately after this tragic event, to condemn and severely repress those who dared to rebel, we would have suppressed this anarchic idea before it could spread and the present disturbances would have been dealt with and the orders of the Government carried out. But, as the situation then was tense and the Imperial Army was not yet free from the problems caused by the war and had not undergone the new organization, it was not possible to dispatch large forces to Albania and to take the necessary measures for this purpose. (4) Nevertheless, failure to punish those who dared to provoke the assassination of Mehmet Ali Pasha, the insufficient number of imperial soldiers present at that time, as well as the negligence of those charged to investigate into this affair, and the emergence of all sorts of



disorders among the imperial soldiers, encouraged the leaders of the League. The intriguers, who nourished the morbid idea of putting Albania under another form of government, gave their backing to the arbitrary and insurrectional activities of the leaders of the League. They persuaded some simple-minded people that the return of Albania to a system of government that would respond to their interests depended only on their strengthening the League and, while extending its influence over the whole of Albania, they should act in such a manner as to enable Albania to prove its existence in the eyes of Europe. Those factors, on the one hand, and the disorientation of public opinion through the incitements and lies of foreigners, on the other, began producing their effect. (5) So the leaders of the League were able to set up openly the Leagues of Gjakova, Peja and Prizren, as well as its branches in most towns of Gegeria. The government officials for their part assumed a passive stand, thereby objectively contributing to the propagation of the idea of the League and feigning to notice nothing of what was going on.

The high person (6) is fully informed about what those who wish us evil tried to do at the Congress of Berlin in order to deprive Albania of Plava and Gucia, which are the key to this country and a powerful barrier against Slavism, and to give them over to Montenegro; the indolence displayed by the local imperial authorities over a question of such importance is also well-known.

Although the Congress of Berlin explicitly declared that, in regard to the territories that would be detached from the Ottoman empire and ceded to Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, the criteria of religion and nationality were not at all taken into consideration in the territories which were annexed to Montenegro, from the north, the east and the south. So, the territories to be handed over to Montenegro included those of Gucia and Plava, which are entirely inhabited by Moslems and Albanians, altogether different from the Montenegrins in religion and nationality. All this, as well as the rejection by certain states of the proposal made by the Ottoman Empire to give Montenegro, in exchange for these regions, the *nahije* of Little Vasovic, the population of which is of the same race and the same nationality as the Montenegrins, are sufficient proof of the injustice done to us on this question.

So, in my modest opinion, the question of ceding Gucia and Plava to Montenegro emerged immediately after the assassination of Mehmet Ali Pasha. But the Montenegrins who attacked Gucia were routed twice in succession. After that, the Sublime Porte promised to give the Montenegrins the above places in a regular and peaceful manner; for this purpose it dispatched large military forces which, through unpardonable imprudence, could not discharge themselves of their mission and were powerless in front of the Albanians. With all this, the Albanian League spread over the whole of Gegeria and its Committees engaged everywhere in insurrectional activities which ran counter to the desires of the Government. Indeed, in some places the government authorities lost all influence and the management of affairs went over to the Committees of the League, which took all power into their hands. With the signing of the Count Corti Accord, it became clearer that the Sublime Porte was compelled into ceding Tuz, Hot and Gruda to Montenegro, in exchange for Plava and Gucia. In the meantime, those who were obliged to approve of this accord also indicated the road for resolving the problem according to the circumstances of the moment and in such a manner as to make the Albanians accept it without being forced into opposition. They demanded that this exchange should be accepted under certain conditions. However, in the unfavourable situation of that time and because of continuous pressure by foreigners, the conditions required for the above exchange were not respected. The proposition made by Count Corti of ceding Tuz, Hot and Gruda, instead of Plava and Gucia, was accepted almost to the letter. Immediately after the signing of the accord and the exchange of documents, all this was made public, upon which, the Imperial Army evacuated its fortified positions at Tuz. The Montenegrin Army, however, did not act according to the accord. It delayed the occupation of the above places and, eventually, under the pretext of the armed resistance of some highlanders, backed down. In the meantime, the League



of Shkodra invaded Tuz with a large armed force and, within a short period, made it impossible for the Montenegrins to enter those parts. The timid measures taken by the local government administration at that time added to the courage of the Albanians. With the knowledge of the government authorities, they set up a committee called the "Commission of the League of Welfare". The five or six thousand insurgents who invaded Tuz administered it for a long period. That is why the Imperial government could not apply the provisions of the accord. The ceding of Ulqin to Montenegro represented a small risk compared with the grave dangers that would arise in the future, if Gucia, Plava and Tuz were to be delivered to Montenegro. From the military point of view, the importance of Ulqin was not great, but it had very great economic importance. So, it is regrettable that our state lost this town

Nevertheless, it was quite reasonable for the Ottoman Empire to accept the solution of the problem of Gucia, which had become disquieting, by exchanging it with Ulqin. After the Ottoman Empire acquiesced to this exchange, action to apply it proceeded with apathy; it is clear that, as a whole, the measures taken over this problem up to the more recent times deserve no praise. Had these measures been based on more solid grounds, had not a host of petty trifles caused a great loss of time, which resulted in the proliferation of the committees of our adversaries, (7) this question would have been resolved in a very short time according to the supreme will of the Sultan. Nevertheless, thanks to /.../ His Imperial Majesty, the question of Ulqin was resolved. Moreover, the Principality of Montenegro which never ceased contesting every action of ours and trying to find every pretext for protests, expressed its special thanks for the orderly manner in which the town and *nahije* of Ulqin were delivered to it. Law and order have been re-established in the Vilayet of Shkodra. The administration which, for a certain time, was in the hands of the League, has been restored and the authority of the Government is fully established. The situation in this country is now better and calmer than it was some years ago. The population of the country is quiet. Although immediately after the solution of the problem of Ulqin, the local Leagues and their anti-government activities have been stopped, the idea of union and insurrection is always alive in the regions of Prizren, Peja, Gjakova, Dibra and Mat. Hence, as long as this idea has not completely disappeared and the Government has not succeeded in exercising its authority to the due extent, one cannot hope that peace and security can be established in Gegeria. As long as the idea of the League exists in Albania and the internal and external intrigues remain, it is always possible that, availing themselves of the difficult circumstances in which the Empire finds itself, they will turn again to their evil idea and engage in insurrectional activities. Hence, we deem it indispensable that they should be put under severe control so as to remove the causes of their activity against the state; conditions should be created from now on for the empire to profit from this country. Hence, I allow myself to expound to you the measures which, in my modest opinion, should be taken in this case.

At a proper occasion, sufficient military forces should be dispatched to and stationed in the regions of Gegeria; which live still with the idea of the League, or dream of autonomy; ways should be found for these forces to begin to have friendly relations with the population and mix with it so that the latter is assured that no harm will come from them. Later, at a more appropriate moment and a more propitious occasion, the founders of the League and those who have incited the population to demand autonomy, as well as their families, should be interned one after the other to remote places, under various pretexts. This should be done through the demonstration of strength and authority of the army, resorting to well-weighed measures, while paying no attention either to eventual general uneasiness or complaints on the part of foreigners...



This modest report which I permit myself to present to your Highness is a summary of the opinions of your servant regarding Albania.

December 15, 96 (December 27, 1880)

Dervish

Bb. A.I. Jilldiz esas evraki 14 88/16 88 12.



## NOTES

\* Taken from *The Albanian League of Prizren in Ottoman* documents, prepared by K.Prifti, Tirana 1989, pp. 143-150. In the original, the document has the following title : "Contents of the coded telegram sent by Dervish Pasha from Shkodra".

- 1 Submission to the Ottoman Empire.
- 2 The Albanian League aimed at forming an Albanian national autonomous state.
- 3 Marshal Mehmet Ali Pasha.
- 4 The suppression of the Albanian League.
- 5 Contrary to the truth, Dervish Pasha tries to present the Albanian national movement as a consequence of foreign interference.
- 6 Perhaps the question here is about the Grand Vizier of the Sultan, as the report was addressed to the Grand Vizier who would convey it to the Sultan.
- 7 The members of the Albanian League.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE ALBANIAN POPULATION OF KOSOVA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

Prof. ALI HADRI  
Prishtina

#### THE POSITION AND CONDITION OF KOSOVA IN THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA (\*) (1918-1941)

**The geographical position and national structure of Kosova.** The region of Kosova includes the territory (\*\*) of 10 690 sq. km and lies between Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania. The geographical position of Kosova has special importance because, as part of the central region of the Balkan Peninsula, it has the shortest access to both the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas. That is precisely why Kosova has had great importance both in Mediaeval and in modern and more recent times. (1)

According to available figures, Kosova had 461 970 inhabitants in 1921, 552 352 in 1931, and 660 276 on March 31, 1941. On the basis of statistics, we can prove that, in Kosova, the Albanians comprised about 70 per cent of the population, while, of the remainder, the majority was Serbs and a small number of Montenegrins. (2)

**The economic condition of Kosova.** Characteristic of the economy of Kosova in the time of old Yugoslavia was the domination of backward agriculture. The handicraftsmen and merchants dominated in the towns, but a large part of the urban population was engaged in farming. Industry was in its initial phase of growth, the natural type of production was the rule. Hence, economic backwardness prevailed, even though favourable natural and demographic conditions existed for the economic development of that province.

The agriculture of Kosova was undeveloped throughout the whole period of the old Yugoslavia. According to the census taken in 1931, 87 per cent of the active population were engaged in this sector. The productivity of labour was very low. Production had an extensive character, therefore agriculture as a main branch of the farming economy stagnated. The rates of yields of grain were very low. The situation in fruit-growing was a little better, because in the period from 1930-1939, the area of orchards increased 3 fold; but viticulture did not expand in the area. (3)

The structure of the crops planted also shows the backwardness of farming in Kosova. In fact, the bulk of the land was planted to grain - 96.8 per cent, to industrial crops - 0.4 per cent, to vegetables (mainly potatoes, beans, cabbage) - 2.2 per cent while to forage crops for livestock - 0.6 per cent of the total cultivated area. On the other hand, the land was not used to advantage because the main crop was maize, which is not profitable as food or as a cash crop. Like agriculture, livestock-farming, too, and this can be inferred from the productivity of the animals. In general, livestock-farming had an extensive character; therefore, the standard of the rural population, which comprised four-fifths of the total population of Kosova, was low. (4)

The extensive character of agriculture in these parts is a of primitive technical equipment.



Of the total number of farming families who possessed land, 55,8 per cent had no ploughs, and of the total number of ploughs, 33,8 per cent were primitive wooden ones. In 1939, in Kosova, there were four tractors, 22 187 ploughs, 5 thrashing-machines, and 6 harvesters and reaper machines. Apart from the technical equipment, the structure of land ownership had a negative effect on agriculture. Of 64 000 families all told, 3 100 were landless or owned 0.51-1 ha; 9 300 had 1.01-2 ha; 24 300 had 2.01-5 ha; 16 800 had 5.01-10 ha, and 7 400 had more than 10 ha. Hence, 62.6 per cent or two thirds of the farming families had less than 5 ha of land, which is a very small area, because the Albanian families were large. (5)

Finally, the primitive level of agriculture was due also to the powerful influence of the natural economy and an increase in rural population. Although with difficulty, agriculture gradually became market-oriented, and this is characteristic especially of fruit and grapes for the market and also of vegetables especially for Prizren, Mitrovica and Prishtina, where they were sold more than in other centres of Kosova. (6)

The cause of the backwardness of farming in this part should be sought, both in the period of bourgeois Yugoslavia and before, not only in the undeveloped economy but also in unjust agrarian policy.

The official circles claimed that the goal of agrarian reform in bourgeois Yugoslavia was to liquidate the big properties and feudal relations as well as to encourage colonization, especially in "Southern Serbia". The same circles however confirmed that colonization had to do with economic, social, national, cultural and hygienic interests. (7)

Characteristic of Kosova, Macedonia and the Sandjak is the fact that the agrarian reform was closely linked with colonization, the colonization having preceded the agrarian reform and having given it basic direction. The decree with the force of law on the colonization of recently liberated and united under the Kingdom of Serbia, which was adopted on February 20, 1914, served as legislation on the settlement of "southern regions". On the basis of this decree, the Law on colonization was approved on June 11, 1931. By means of the legislation on colonization, the Great-Serb bourgeoisie wanted to settle these parts with "sound nationalist elements". In fact, under the law on the colonization of southern regions, a person who wishes to quit has to present facts about his "conduct", and it is provided that the land will be taken from the person who shifts, if it is found that he is acting against the social order. (8)

The colonization began in 1912, but it was interrupted during the First World War. After the War, it was resumed. Later, through this decree on colonization of southern regions on September 2, 1920, the state began to give colonists fixed amounts of financial support. According to this law, colonists had the right to transport their families, household furniture and animals free of charge, then to take timber free of charge from state or communal forests for houses and other purposes. At the same time, they were relieved of paying state taxes for three years, and later for five years, while the law on the colonization of southern regions of 1931 extended this period to 10 years in regard to direct state taxes, and to five years in regard to the independent direct and other local taxes.

Up to the end of October 1940, according to the records of the Supreme Directorate of the Agrarian Reform in Shkup, in nearly all the territory of the "southern regions", the following results had been achieved in agrarian reform and colonization: the agrarian directorates of Peja, Ferizaj, Mitrovica, Prizren and Shkup had taken for the needs of the agrarian reform 381 245 ha of land. Of this total, 142 588 had been allocated to colonists, volunteers, option-holders and independent colonists (17 679 families), while 30 582 families of sharecroppers, tillers of the soil, true owners, on the basis of clause 34 of the Law on colonization, had received an exchange of a total of 88 115 ha; 289 model schools received 10 930 ha, while the army and the gendarmerie 1 451 ha; 53 villages received 57 345 ha for common pasture and 7 319 ha for roads. At that time, 73 058 ha remained unallocated. Of a total of 281 245 ha, 228 080 ha were taken mainly in the territory of Kosova, respectively in the regions of the agrarian directorates



in Peja, Ferizaj, Mitrovica and Prizren. Since that time, in the territory of the "southern regions", 15 943 houses were built for the colonists, the state built 7 712, the colonists on their own built 13 024 and with state aid 207 houses. (9)

From the statistical records about colonization beginning from January 1, 1939, which the Supreme Directorate of the agrarian reform in Shkup has compiled, we learn that in 10 districts of Kosova 183 848 ha have been definitively allocated (in the district of Mitrovica 3 540.52 ha; in Vuçiterna 11 756.90 ha; in Drenica 14 294.55 ha; in Istok 15 100.41 ha; in Peja 16 001.84 ha; in Gjakova 40 031.18 ha; in Podrima 20 240.62 ha; in Prizren 17 956.49 ha; in Lab 7 057.33 ha; in Ferizaj 37 910.96 ha). (10)

The statistical records of the Supreme Directorate of the agrarian reform in Shkup show that up to July 1, 1935, 8 401 houses for the colonists were built in the region of Kosova (in the region of the agrarian directorate of Vuçiterna 1 475, of Mitrovica 81, of Gjakova 1 793, of Peja 2 503, of Ferizaj 1980, and of Prizren 569). On the other hand, from the statistical table of the colonization of Southern Regions we learn that up to December 31, 1931, in the banovina (provinces) of Vardar, Zeta and Morava 10 969 houses for colonists were built. (11)

On the basis of these records, it can be said that the injustice of the bourgeois agrarian reform has been expressed specifically in Kosova, because in this region with an extremely dense population the greatest number of the colonists' families has been settled, the bulk of colonists' houses has been built and the largest areas of lands for colonists have been seized. When this is added to the whole series of other injustices such as the establishment of some of the colonists in the homes of albanian peasants by violence, the seizure of their cultivated land and so on, then the whole burden of the agrarian policy of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie can be appreciated better.

Such an unjust policy of colonization had negative consequences both on the immediate situation and on the long-term future. One direct negative result is that in the first years after the War, entire villages put up resistance to the state and thus the army was obliged to use artillery against them. This created an impassable gulf between the state and the population not only in Kosova but also other "southern regions". Both then and later, open or secret hostility existed between locals and colonists, the locals regarding the colonists as usurpers of their land. "Such relations are completely understandable if we remember that colonization was carried out before demands of the locals were fulfilled, in conditions when many of the local people did not have even a small area of land round their homes, while the colonists were given arable fields, common land, pastures and other areas to which the peasants had had right of ownership proved with land deeds." The administrative organs continually incited and inflamed the antagonism between the locals and the colonists, especially in Kosova, both by establishing Montenegrin families, temporarily at least, in the homes of Albanians, and by giving colonists uncultivated land.

Such an antagonism, along with the abandonment of whole villages initially, and even open conflicts, created the impression of insecurity among the colonists, so a number of them abandoned the land and returned to their birthplaces. The bourgeois agrarian policy was even more unjust, because it paved the way for denationalization. (12)

In brief, such an agrarian policy in Kosova and Macedonia had two fundamental aims: the denationalization of Macedonian and Albanian population, and the creation of a gulf between that population and the colonists. The Great-Serb bourgeoisie hoped that it would secure its own social, economic and political position by this means. Whereas it managed up to a point to achieve the latter aim in Kosova, it was unable to carry out its denationalization policy, because the Albanians were not assimilated. (13)

From the industrial stand-point, Kosova was one of the most undeveloped parts of old Yugoslavia, both for the number of persons employed and for the value of basic means of industry per capita of population. It can be said that in this region industry had just begun to be built. (14)



While 199 000 active inhabitants were engaged in farming and forestry, industry, mining, building and handicrafts employed 9 000, communications, commerce and hotels 7 000, and in other activities 13 000 workers. Hence 87 per cent of the active population were engaged in activities of higher productivity, while about 11 per cent were engaged in other tertiary activities.(15)

In old Yugoslavia, Kosova had only one large enterprise - "Trepça" and 25 small enterprises (10 mills, 2 brickworks, 2 mines, 5 joinery shops and 3 electric-power stations). At that time, apart from Trepça, no important industry has been built. Among the small industrial shops there were four joinery shops (in Mitrovica and 1 in Peja), a few industrial mills and here and there a small business enterprise of handicraft rather than industrial type. There was no real manufacturing industry that is to say, no metal-processing electrical or chemical industry existed, without which other industries could not be developed. At that time there was not any real industry for the processing of farm products, although conditions for this were favourable. Of the processing industry, apart from mills, there was also the "Sharr" cement factory General Jankovic. In this province there was neither textile nor printing industry, except for two or three old printing machines; Statistics show that industrial production in 1939 was 36 954 kWh electric power, 92 245 tons of coal, 639 009 tons of lead and zinc, 22 363 tons of magnesite, 16 900 tons of cement and 770 000 bricks. (16)

Since this region is rich in mineral deposits, it is understandable why large investments have been made in this branch; But no major investments in mining were made, so very little was done to exploit the chromite; in Trepça, however, considerable investments were made and production of lead and zinc concentrates began in 1929.(17)

The production of Trepça increased continuously until the beginning of the Second World War. In 1930-1931, 250 000 tons of ore were extracted, while in 1939-1940 more than 700 000 tons. On the other hand, production of concentrate of lead increased from 41 007 to 50 000 tons, while that of concentrate of zinc from 34 000 to 44 000 tons. The lead was not refined until 1940, when a refining plant was installed, and within ten years Trepça became an enterprise of world importance. Since a British company had virtually all the production and profit in its hands, the region did not benefit much from Trepça, except for the employment of a few thousand people in jobs for which professional skills were not necessary. In brief, the exploitation of Trepça had colonial character.(18)

Apart from Trepça, in old Yugoslavia, the Kosova lignite mine, the magnesite deposits of Golesh, the deposits of lead and zinc of Ajvalia and the deposits of chromite at Deva were exploited. These mines were of small capacity. Thus, in 1937, 210 workers were employed in the Ajvalia mine. The mining of the lignite of Kosova began in 1921. Coal was extracted from great depths, so the production was small: 100 000 tons a year. (19).

Although Kosova has rich resources of natural energy because its lignite deposits constitute more than 50 per cent of Yugoslav reserves, and the potential of the rivers is not to be underestimated, these opportunities have not been utilized. If the energy potential had been developed one billion 100 million kWh could be produced. (20)

The motor roads and railways in Kosova were very scarce. Railways were in a poor state, especially the Ibri main line. They had been built practically in one direction: north-west southeast, and not crosswise. According to 1939 records, the total length of railways was 223 km. The motor roads, too, were much poorer than those in other parts of Yugoslavia. Their structure was very unfavourable, because the road network in Kosova consisted mostly of unpaved roads. According to 1939 figures, there were only 828.3 km of motor and gravel roads, and only 8 buses provided public transport. Unpaved roads totalled 1 828.4 km. The proportion of roads was as follows: motor roads 0.03 per cent, roads surfaced with crushed gravel 31.21 per cent, unpaved roads 68.76 per cent. (21)

During the Turkish rule the urban economy was at a slightly higher level than



agriculture. Handicrafts and commerce characterized the economy. These activities did not have the potential for radical economic development of the bourgeois type. (22)

The urban population was largely involved in handicraft production. The fact that in 1939, 2 345 handicraft shops employing 1 818 qualified workers and 1 428 apprentices were registered, showed this. These figures do not include the master craftsmen who owned the handicraft shops. Judging from the number of workers in handicraft shops, a conclusion can be reached that it was small-scale production. The most productive and important craftsmen were the tinsmiths (in Prizren, Prishtina, and some other towns), the tanners (in Prizren, Peja, Gjakova, etc.), weavers (especially in Prizren and Prishtina), the potters, etc. (23)

Commerce too, was an important occupation of the urban population of Kosova. The internal trade was mainly retail. However, wholesale trade was there, too.

During the 22 years of the existence of the bourgeois Yugoslavia, very difficult political conditions prevailed in Kosova, which was, in fact, virtually a colony of the Yugoslav bourgeoisie. The entire working population had no political rights at all. So, the Albanian masses, who comprised the overwhelming majority, found themselves in an exceptionally difficult position from both the political and national standpoints. There is no doubt that this state of affairs was entirely a consequence of the anti-popular policy of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie. (24)

**The national oppression of Albanians.** One of the key problems of the old Yugoslavia was the unresolved national question. In fact, as a result of Great-Serb hegemonism and centralism throughout the period of old Yugoslavia the gulf between the peoples became deeper and deeper.

The denationalizing policy of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie and national oppression increasingly weakened the state organization. Even the very concept of the people of three names (Serbo-Croat-Slovene - ed.) was contrary not only to the national reality and the aspirations of the non-Serbian nations for separate state autonomy in the context of Yugoslavia, but also to the unity and integrity of the state, which was expressed clearly in April of 1941. (25)

Bourgeois Yugoslavia was a real prison for the national minorities. Although the Albanian minority was the largest in number, it was in a particularly difficult position. The bourgeois Yugoslavia had its hands free in regard to the oppression of the Albanians, and this was not the case with some other national minorities like the Germans or Hungarians, who were distinguished for their privileges especially during the rule of pro-fascist regimes from 1935-1941.

The Albanian minority did not enjoy even the most basic national and democratic rights - the right to use the Albanian language in public business, the right of having schools in their mother tongue and the development of national culture and national individuality, the right of publishing in their own language and so on. The administrative matters in Kosova were carried out only in the Serbo-Croat language, and the offices there were held mainly by the more reactionary Serbian-Montenegrin elements who were loyal disciples of the Great-Serb hegemony. In the state administration and in Parliament there was also a small number of reactionary Albanians, who, for the most part, were concerned only with their own selfish interests. (26)

The bourgeois government did not interfere with the religious ideas and certain customs of the Albanians because they were in favour of the Great-Serb hegemony. However, this does not mean that the regime also tolerated the national mentality of the Albanians. Official documents prove that this situation greatly irritated the bourgeois government. In fact, the Great-Serb bourgeoisie interpreted the Albanians' attitude wrongly with the aim of convincing public opinion that the Albanians were a threat to the territorial unity of Yugoslavia and, for this reason, must be assimilated, terrorized, deported or physically wiped out. In an instruction about



the work of the gendarmerie for the elimination of the outlaws, which the Command of the Yugoslav gendarmerie issued on November 8, 1924, the Albanians were described as follows:

"In many districts of Serbia live Albanians savage, uncultured, untrustworthy, cunning and without conscience, people with juridical outlooks from the earliest development of the penal law: the 'private reaction', which is expressed in the form of 'vendetta'. Besides this, they do not accept any sort of advice or instruction and are completely conservative in their outdated concepts about their rights and duties towards the state." (27)

Judging from this and other official documents, the Albanians were considered more unreliable than the Hungarians and the Germans.

A report of the Command of the third Army Zone in 1938 says: "...I only observe that because of the Albanians the situation in this territory differs completely from the situation in the zone of the First Army, where the Hungarians and Germans are living, because, whereas in Backa the Hungarians and Germans together comprise about 60 per cent compared with 40 per cent of our population, in the territory of the zone of Kosova Division, the Albanians comprise about 70 per cent of the population; then while the Hungarians and the Germans are found in the centre of Backa (that is, not on the border front), the Albanians in the territory of the zone of this army are found more on the border front and less in the centre ... This threat from the Albanians... within 27 years ... will become uncontrollable because, if it remains as hitherto, the healthy Albanian population, which is content with little, will increase to the extent that its percentage will be much greater than it is at present." (28)

The Great-Serb bourgeoisie applied the policy of assimilation towards the Albanian national minority. Immediately after the First and Second Balkan Wars, Nikola Pasic thought that, if peace continued for 20-25 years, Serbia would be able to incorporate Macedonia and Kosova completely into its economy and administration, and "to assimilate their people from both cultural and national stand-points. These provinces must be completely subjected to Serbia, just as Nis, Pirot, Leskovac and Vranja were subjected after 1878." This Great-Serb hegemonic policy encountered the resistance of Macedonians and Albanians even before the creation of Yugoslavia as a state; therefore this ought to make the Serbian government believe "that the outdated methods of Milos in 1833 and Ristic in 1878-1879 are not for Macedonia and for Kosova-Metohija. The ineffectiveness and damage caused by this policy in the south was expressed more clearly after the First World War, from 1918 to 1941." (29)

One of the forms of the Great-Serb policy of assimilation between 1918-1941 was also the colonization of the region with Serbs and Montenegrins. Through this it wanted not only to alter the national structure of the population of Kosova at the expense of the Albanians, but also to secure the social-economic and political positions for the Great-Serb hegemony by relying on advocates of this regime among this section of the Slav population. At the same time, the elements settled as colonists should exert an influence for the gradual assimilation of the Albanian population.

On the other hand, the Great-Serb hegemonists tried to thin out the Albanian population in Yugoslavia as much as possible, and especially in Kosova, where it was denser than anywhere else. In order to achieve this purpose, they exerted pressure on the Albanians to shift to Turkey, Albania or some other country. (30) The deportation of Albanians had begun from the time of the Balkan Wars. Official documents prove this. One such document says:

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicates :

"Since the creation of the independent state of Albania, a large number of Albanians from our territory have emigrated to Albania. These emigrants have left for various motives. Some for political reasons and the majority are former Turkish functionaries or officers, headmen with authority and people with schooling, as well as various criminal outlaws, army deserters and others, whom our state has expelled for various reasons.

"Our state organs have favoured the departure of Albanians in order to enable our national



elements to colonize the affected areas along the border. All the persons displaced from our territory are known by the general term kosovar." (31)

The Albanians were deported in large numbers, especially to Turkey. That large number of the inhabitants of Kosova have been deported to Turkey and Albania, it emerges from the following statistics: the number of inhabitants in this region in 1910 was 475 000, while in 1920 a total of 439 000. Within those ten years, the population there was reduced by 157 000 (because of deportation and natural mortality). There is no doubt that the main cause for the reduction in the number of the inhabitants is deportation and, besides that, the losses in the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Removal of the population continued after this period. The statistics show that in 1931 there were 552 000 inhabitants in Kosova and in 1940, 667 000 - an increase of 115 000. This number is small, but if it is compared with the increase of the population between 1900 and 1910, which was 97 000 inhabitants, and when it is borne in mind that in 1900, the total population was 378 000 and in 1931 - 552 000, then we can conclude that because of the great shifting of the population, the number of the inhabitants on the eve of the catastrophe of April 1931 was smaller than it should have been. (32)

The Yugoslav government tried to present the removal of the Albanians and Turks (Moslems) from Yugoslavia not only as a national-political question, but, first of all, as one of the most important social problems, because with the removal of Moslems, large areas of fertile land would be free on which it could be possible to settle a large number of Montenegrins, Dalmatians, Likas and Hercegovinians. (33)

The Belgrade Culture Club paid special attention to the national question in "Southern Serbia", that is, the question of the removal of the Albanians from Yugoslavia. A report made on May 16, 1938 points out that the work to date for the colonization of "Southern Serbia" with the aim of eliminating the Albanians has not yielded proper results, because the danger and damage from this element still exist from both the national and economic stand-point and from the stand-point of the military security of the state; therefore it recommended that the Albanians be deported from Yugoslavia to Albania or Turkey, in the same way as Bulgaria, Romania and Greece have solved the problem of national minorities. If this plan could not be carried out, it recommended buying the land and giving it to Serbs and Montenegrins, so that the Albanians would be obliged to shift of their own accord. The report concludes by saying that the question of Albanians in Yugoslavia is extremely urgent; therefore "through the favourable solution of it in time of peace, we will greatly assist the defence of our state in case of war, and will economically strengthen our element in Southern Serbia. He who solves this question successfully will perform an immortal deed for our people." (34) So, the removal of Albanians from Yugoslavia is described here as a Serbian national mission, with the aim of increasing the Serbian population in the south of the country, as an essential need for the defence of the homeland (because the Albanians are considered a non-nation element to Yugoslavia), and as an economic need - with the aim of improving the economic situation of the Serbian population.

The Albanians did not move willingly. The state organs were not pleased about this situation, or about the number of the Albanians who shifted. Therefore, the minister of the Army and the Navy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, with court order no. 8691, dated October 7, 1938, ordered that the deportation should continue, while the Command of the Third Army Zone proposed that new garrisons should be formed at Rahovec, Suhareka, Podujeva, Vuçiterna, Gilan and Kaçanik with the aim that, by relying on them, "the colonization with our population (Slavs- the author) could be carried out in an effective way in the places where compact groups of Albanians lived." (35) After it was informed about the signing of the convention with Turkey, the Command of the Third Army Zone made the following proposal:

"We should take care that the Albanians of the border zone are deported first, then those of other parts, and finally the Turks. Although the Turks are not unreliable, their removal is still necessary in order to facilitate the removal of the Albanians..."



"In regard to the deportation, this issue is one of our very important problems. The colonization which has been carried out to date has not yielded satisfactory results. Therefore, special attention should be paid to this matter, and it must be solved properly, systematically and energetically.

"Because of the specific circumstances in this territory, from now on we must try to colonize these parts with the Serbian element. The colonists should be first of all people from Toplica, Vranja, and then from Hercegovina, Boka, Dalmatia, and Bosnia, and the others after them. We must try to break up the strong and compact groups of Albanians as quickly as possible by infusing about at least 50 per cent of our population amongst them. Without this, it cannot be considered that the displacement has been carried out effectively, because the natural increase of the Albanian population is very great; therefore, if the settlement of our element is not carried out completely, the entire solution of this problem may be in danger.

"First of all, the state must do everything in its power to ensure that the colonization of our population is carried out in the best possible way. I observe that for colonization in the purely Albanian villages the agrarian reform, that is, the seizure of the land, cannot be applied, but their lands have to be bought and paid for well, in order to be able to get possession of them, and then, carry on the colonization of the purchased land. The millions that would be paid for buying such lands will be very insignificant in comparison with the advantage of dispersing the compact Albanian population in their villages. In this work an auxiliary role must be played by the church, the people's defence, and private enterprises, various associations, such as that of Princess Milica and Princess Zorka, and the Circle of the Serbian Sisters, etc.

"The measures that have to be undertaken for this purpose would be :

- a) the payment by the state for the cost of the stock and improvement of the land;
- b) the appointment of the best bureaucrats as officials in these parts;
- c) the raising of the cultural and educational level of the people (Serbian -ed.); the church will undertake this action;
- d) the organization of aid by various cultural and national associations for facilitating the development of the economy for the colonists;
- e) the collection of voluntary aid from people by various associations in order to make possible the building of churches ..." (36)

We quoted almost this whole document because it illustrates very well what has been the aim of the removal of Albanians from Yugoslavia and the settling of Serbian colonists, first of all, in place of them, and how it was expected to carry this out. However, the Great-Serb bourgeoisie was unable to accomplish its plan, although the work in this direction was carried out systematically, because the overwhelming majority of the Albanians did not wish to leave.

In old Yugoslavia, you might say, permanent terror was exerted against the Albanian national minority through frequent arrests, massacres and the liquidation of people contrary to the law. During and after the First Balkan War, the Montenegrin army and gendarmerie imposed an unprecedented terror on Kosova and forced some Moslem Albanians to accept conversion into Christian religion. Sava Lazarevic-Batari and his gendarmes had especially a bad reputation. After the creation of the Serbian-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, the terror against the Albanians of Kosova continued. Here must be sought one of the reasons why, for a period of some years, this territory was teeming with a movement of the outlaws. The state organs applied harsh measures to break the outlaws' resistance. Since this movement had not been extinguished by 1924, the commander of the Yugoslav gendarmerie, the Division-General Voj M. Tomic, issued orders for the wiping out of outlaws in "Southern Serbia". This order points out that, because of their outlook and for political reasons, the Albanians were creating "outlaw bands", that some outlaws were with the Committee of Kosova, while most of them were under the influence of the headmen of clans and bajraks and headmen in towns. The outlaw movement was so widespread and serious that the need to put it down was discussed in Parliament. It was



said that this movement would be broken up immediately if Ferat Bej Draga were to desire such a thing, and that the state administration could not completely pacify the outlaws "until the people themselves assisted in this direction." It was stressed in Parliament that harsh reprisals had to be imposed with the aim of quelling the outlaws. (37)

Even after the liquidation of the outlaw movement, the terror against the Albanian population did not cease until the catastrophe of Yugoslavia in April 1941. The terror was especially harsh on the occasion of elections in order to force the Albanian voters to vote in favour of the ruling party, as well as on the occasion of the collection of weapons from 1938-1941.

Unrelenting economic pressure, also, was exercised against the Albanians by means of an unjust agrarian and tax policy. Cases were not rare when tax collectors, using falsified registers, collected taxes from illiterate Albanians two or more times within one year. Besides this, it frequently occurred that the tax agencies, compelled the Albanian peasants to pay taxes even for the lands which had been taken from them and which, at that time, they worked on half shares. This pressure took the form of fines in money. (38)

There were many conditions favourable to the incitement and spread of chauvinism, including those inherited from the time of the Turkish rule (especially religious fanaticism), and those which resulted from the ill-intentioned policy of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie (seizure of land from Albanian peasants, the settling of colonists, the non-recognition of the Albanians' fundamental national rights, the spread of the rumour that the Albanians were enemies of the Serbs, "much worse than the Turks", etc. ). The holders of power told the Serbs and the Montenegrins: "We are working to help you, but these cursed Albanians won't let us," while through the local reactionaries - some headmen - they spread word to the Albanians: "We are trying to make things better for you, but these enemies of yours, that is, the Serbs and Montenegrins, won't let us." The struggle of the Serbo-Montenegrin reaction in connection with deportation and the unjust agrarian policy, also, was an important factor for the spread of hatred between nationalities. Since Serbo-Montenegrin reaction said openly that all the lands had to be taken from the Albanians and they had to be deported to Turkey, Albanian reaction, on the other hand, exploited these two delicate questions in order to present themselves as champions of the Albanians and blame the Slavs, the Serbs and Montenegrins, as a whole, for the enslaved position of the Albanian national minority. (39)

Their enslaved position Albanians caused to have great discontent towards bourgeois Yugoslavia and, consequently, created a strong anti-Yugoslav disposition. Even official documents point this out. A report of the Ministry of the Army and the Navy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of April 1939 says: "The Albanians are discontented with the situation in which they find themselves in our state today. This is a living fact which nothing can negate. They are seeking a way out of this situation..."

"This situation can be paralysed in two ways: either they must be deported from our territory as quickly as possible, or their material demands must be met..."(40)

The Albanian resistance resulting from their discontent expressed itself in different ways: in the form of armed and unarmed movements against the unjust agrarian policy, in the form of the agitation of headmen and other personalities to the authorities to refuse to go to Turkey, the reaction in connection with going to reservations, in the form of the demand that, along with the settlement of the Croatian question, the question of the Albanian national minority should be settled, too, by giving them their autonomy, and that the fundamental democratic and national rights of the Albanians should be recognized. And, finally, this resistance expressed itself through their protest against terror, their emigrations to Albania and in other forms.(41)

**The cultural and educational circumstances.** Until 1941, cultural and educational backwardness was characteristic of Kosova. This was a consequence both of the 500-year-old rule of Turkey and the unjust educational-cultural policy of the Great-Serb



bourgeoisie in old Yugoslavia.

Following the incorporation of Kosova into the Yugoslav state, the Serbian population made satisfactory progress, because primary and secondary schools were opened for them, while nothing was done for the schooling of the Albanian national minority. Moreover, even those schools which had existed previously for teaching in the Albanian language, were closed after the First World War, allegedly because the Albanians themselves did not want to attend them.

Statistical data of the school-year 1939-1940 show that in Kosova there were 252 obligatory schools with 37 885 pupils and 657 teachers and instructors, as well as 13 secondary schools, five of which were general secondary schools. Only 30.2 per cent of the children were enrolled in these schools. In the school-year 1940-1941, in the primary schools there were 24 914 Serbian and Montenegrin children and only 11 876 Albanian children. The number of pupils from the Albanian nationality in general secondary schools was very small; for several years on end, they made up only 2 per cent of the total number of pupils. In the school-year 1939-1940, in general secondary schools there were 5 221 pupils, mainly serbs and Montenegrins. Virtually the teaching staff, was made up of Serbs and Montenegrins, as lessons were given only in the Serbo-Croat language. At the end of the school-year 1939-1940, there was a teaching staff of 1 126, made up of 728 primary school teachers, 273 secondary school teachers and instructors and a 125 technical teachers and instructors who worked in the lower vocational schools. (42)

The low level of school attendance by children of Albanian nationality, which is understandable when it is borne in mind that country children, especially, had no knowledge at all of the Serbo-Croat language, produced a high level of illiteracy - more than 90 per cent of the Albanian population were illiterate. (43)

This backwardness of the Albanians suited the Great-Serb hegemony. Official documents confirm this. Thus, on October 17, 1938, the Command of the Third Army Zone sent a report to the Ministry of the Army and Navy about the measures against the Albanians of Kosova. Among other things, this report says: "In the purely Albanian regions, children should not be demanded to attend school, that is, they should not receive schooling, and it is important that they should not be trained as soldiers prematurely..., because, if they gain ability from this stand-point they will cause us only harm in the future ... It is proposed that cultural and educational work be entrusted to the church with the aim that the children of Albanians should not attend school." (44)

Kosova at that time was very backward not only from the stand-point of schooling, but also from that of culture. For example, in 1939 there were only three public libraries with 6 000 books (all in the Serbo-Croat language), a popular university, only a few orchestras, choirs and drama groups in towns and schools, seven permanent cinemas, and 713 radio-sets. There were no houses of culture, cultural and scientific institutions and no publishing industry in the Albanian language, while severe punishments were imposed on importing books from Albania. (45)

No attention at all was paid to the health or agricultural education of the population. In 1940, there was a total of 46 doctors in the region, which means one doctor for every 13 196 inhabitants. Before the Second World War, there was only one low agricultural school. It is self-evident that this alone could not handle the agricultural schooling of the population. (46)

**Conclusion.** Viewed objectively, Kosova was the most backward province in old Yugoslavia from the stand-points of its material base and its superstructure.

In fact, for the Serbian bourgeoisie, this region was a kind of colony. Through its economic and cultural policy, the bourgeoisie hindered normal development here, because it considered Kosova territory inhabited mostly by a "non-national population - by groups of Albanians."

The backwardness of Kosova is a result not only of the unjust policy of the Serbian



bourgeoisie, but also of the primitive conditions inherited from centuries of the Turkish rule.

In economy, these consequences could be seen in the extensive character of agriculture, the lack of development of industry, the failure to utilize the energy resources, in communications, and the primitive handicrafts. Hence, it was a typically agrarian region.

In culture and education, the backwardness was expressed in the weak network of primary and secondary schools as well as cultural institutions, in the low level of school attendance by Albanian children and youth, in the low level of health and agricultural education, and in the predominance of illiteracy.

Such economic backwardness, especially in industry, meant that the working class, especially the industrial proletariat, was small in numbers. "Trepçe" was the only exception to this, but even the unqualified workers in this enterprise were mostly linked with the countryside and its outlook.

This region was characterized not only by an economic and cultural backwardness and a small number of the working class, but the unsolved social question, which in the case of workers presented itself in the form of social misery, and in the case of peasants in the form of the unjust solution of the agrarian question. The agrarian question was a most delicate one, as the impoverished masses of peasants now comprised the largest part of population.

In bourgeois Yugoslavia, the Albanians lived in difficult circumstances. Not only were they denied the fundamental democratic and national rights which even classical bourgeois democracy recognizes to national minorities, but the Serbian bourgeoisie tried to denationalize and assimilate them, and indeed, to wipe them out physically. We think that the position of the Albanians in old Yugoslavia should not be identified with that of other national minorities, as is commonly done in our historical and political literature to date, because it is undeniable that the Albanians lived in conditions much more difficult than the members of other national minorities.



## NOTES

\* Abridged from the review *Gjurmime Albanologjike* (Albanological Investigations), no.2, Prishtina 1968.

\*\* In the late 1950s, a territory totalling 187 sq km (the present commune of Leposavie) with a population overwhelmingly Slav, mainly Serbian, was attached to the province of Kosova. Today the area of the province is 10 877 sq km (ed.).

1 Dr. Mark Krasniqi, *Savremene drustveno-geografske promene na Kosovu i Metohiji*, Prishtina 1963, pp. 3-4.

2 *Ibid.*, the Archives of the Institute of Military History (AIMH; P.17, K.26, F.3, D.501).

3 *Stanje i mogucnosti*, 6; *Problemi dugorocnog razvoja*, 63.

4 *Ibid.*, 28, 63; Dr. Mark Krasniqi, *op.cit.*, p. 247.

5 Ekonomski institut NR Srbije, *Proizvodne snage*, Belgrade 1953, 148; *Stanje i mogucnosti*, pp.6-7.

6 *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, pp. 63-64.

7 AIMU, F.17, K.96, F.4, D.7 (*Referat o potrebi intenzivnog sprovođenja slobodne*).

8 Dr. Nikola Vuco, *Poljoprivreda Jugoslavija 1918-1941*, Belgrade 1958; Dr. Milivoje Eric, *Agrarna reforma u Jugoslaviji 1918-1941*, Sarajevo 1958.

9 The Archives of Yugoslavia (AJ), F.48 (*Statisticki pregled obavljenih radova do oktobra 1940 Tehnickog otseka Vrhovnog poverenistva agrarne reforme u Skoplju na dan 11.XI.1940*).

10 *Ibid.*

11 AJ, F.47.

12 Dr. Milivoje Eric, *op. cit.*, p.412.

13 *Archives of the Institute of History of Montenegro* : (AIHMZ), D. 8909/V - 2a - 10 (*Izvestaj dopisnika CPB*, br. 57, od.25. VII.1940).

14 *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, pp.21-22.

15 *Stanje i mogucnosti*, p.6.

16 *Stanje i mogucnosti*, p.5; *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, p. 2, 23, 65; Dr. Mark Krasniqi; *op.cit.*, pp. 31, 98; Rinaldo Ljubibratic, *Privredni potencijal i razvoj AKMO*, "Ekonomist", Belgrade 1959, 1987.

17 *Rilindja*, 29.11.1958; Dr. Mark Krasniqi, *op. cit.*, p.107.

18 *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, pp. 64-65.

19 Dr. Mark Krasniqi, *op.cit.*, pp. 107-108; Sekretarijat za industriju i saobracaj Izvrsnog veca NO AKMO, *Studija o mogucnostima koriscenja lignita kao energetsko-sirovinske baze*, Prishtina 1959; pp. 12-15; V. Simic, *Razvoj ugljenokopa ugljarske privrede Srbije*. Posebno izdanje SAN, Beograd 1958, p.245.

20 *Problemi dugorocnog razvoja*, pp. 23, 65, 175.

21 *Ibid.* 65, 179-182; Zavod za privredno planiranje AKMO, *Materijal o razvoju AKMO 1947-1955*; Prishtina 1955, table no.14-15; *Stanje i mogucnosti* 5.

22 *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, p.62.

23 *Stanje i mogucnosti* p.57; Dr. Mark Krasniqi, *op.cit.*, p.30.

24 Shorthand notes of the NC of the CL of Serbia, on 14 and 15 March 1961, p.24.

25 Dr. Jovan Dordevic, *Ustavno pravo*, Beograd 1958, p.43.

26 Sveta Popovic, *Polozaj radnog coveka u kapitalistickoj i socialistivkoj Jugoslaviji*, Beograd 1958, pp.31-32.

27 AIMH, P.17, K.60, F.1, D.1 (*Izvestaj Komande zandarmerije Jugoslavije*, br. 2989, 9.XI.1924).



- 28 AINH, P.17, K.26, F.3, D.50 (Izvestaj III Armijske oblasti, br. 1859/38).
- 29 Dr. Vasa Cubrilovic, *Istorija politicke misli u Srbiji XIX veka*, Beograd 1958, pp. 413, 451.
- 30 The opinion expressed on some occasions (ed.) that only the Turks were deported from Macedonia and Kosova to Turkey cannot be accepted, because both the official documents and those of the CPY show clearly that they refer to the deportation of Albanians and Turks from Macedonia and of Albanians from Kosova.
- 31 AINH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.37 (Izvestaj Ministarstva vojske i mornarice, br. 6889/39).
- 32 Zavod za statistiku NR Srbije, *Kretanje stanovnika NRS od 1834, do 1853*, Belgrade 1953, p.42; 1959; pp.292, 307; *Problemi dugorocnog planiranja*, pp. 35-36.
- 33 AINH, P.17, K.27, F.1, D.20 (Peticija katolickog klera upucena generalnom sekretaru Društva naroda, 5.V.1930); ASPJ (*Archive of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs*), LP 1937, I/5, poslova, br. 1317/IV, 23.VI.1938).
- 34 AIMH, P.17, K.69, F.4, D.1 (Report : *Problem narodnosti u Juznoj Srbiji*).
- 35 AIMH, P.17, K.26, F.3, D.50 (Izvestaj III armijske oblasti, br. 1859/38).
- 36 *Ibidem*.
- 37 AIMH, P.17, K.60, F.1, D.1 (Upustva Komande zandarmerije za likvidaciju kacaka u Juznoj Srbiji, br.2989, 8.XI.1974); Archive of the Institute of History (AIHP) in Prishtina. Unregistered document.
- 38 AIHP, D.273 (Letter of Predrag Ajtic of the year 1939 (?); Fadil Hoxha, Speech at the Constituent Assembly (shortthand notes), Belgrade (?), 326; AIHMZ, D.8909.
- 39 Mita Miljkovic, *Znani i neznani*, pp. 66-67; Fadil Hoxha, *op.cit.*, p.196, 325.
- 40 AIMH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.49 (Izvestaj Ministarstva vojske i mornarice, br. 4881/38).
- 41 AIMH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.49c (Izvestaj Deneralstaba, br. 438, 15.I.1938); AIMH, P.17, K.31, F.4, D.11 (Izvestaj Kosovske divizije, br. 350, 30.IV.1940); AIMH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.49 (Izvestaj poverenika grada Beograda, br. 9162/39); AIMH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.49 (Izvestaj Deneralstaba, br. 14371/39); AIMH, P.17, K.22, F.3, D.49 (Izvestaj Ministarstva vojske i mornarice, br.5411/39).
- 42 Savet za prosvetu i kulturu AKMO. Razvoj skolstva AKMO u razdoblju 1953-1956 i perspektivni program 1957-1961, 6-8; Savet za prosvetu AKMO, Dosadasnji i perspektivni razvoj skolstva u AKMO. Pristina 1957, 5, 15.
- 43 Mita Miljkovic, *O polozaju nacionalnih manjina u NRS, Crvena zastava*, Belgrade, 1948, br.2,30.
- 44 AIMH, P.17, K.26, F.3, D.50 (Izvestaj III armijske oblasti, br. 1859/38).
- 45 Pregled kulturno-umetnicke delatnosti u AKMO (Materijal za internu upotrebu Saveta za kulturu AKMO).
- 46 Material on the development of KAKM 1945-1947. Table no.35; *Twenty years of Cultural Development in Kosova-Metohija*, Prishtina 1957, p.17.



## THE FORCED DEPORTATION OF ALBANIANS IN THE YEARS 1912-1941

The military occupation of Kosova and other regions with Albanian population by Serbia and Montenegro in 1912 and their re-occupation in 1918 by the Serbian army were followed by a special policy of oppression, terror and continuous assimilation of Albanians. Its purpose was to denationalize Albanians and to "slavize" them permanently through their mass annihilation, the seizure of their land and other possessions, their expulsion from their native land and its colonization with Slav elements.

One of the main goals of this policy, initially of Serbia and Montenegro, and later of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, (1) was the forced deportation of Albanians. Its aim was to drive Albanians away from Kosova and other regions and to create favourable circumstances for settling hundreds of thousands of Slav colonists who must definitively fill the vacuum.

The results of Albanian expulsion from Toplica (Prokuplje, Kurshumli, Leskovc, Nis and Vranja) in 1878 and the progress of its colonization in the closing decade of the 19th century persuaded the rulers in Belgrade and those of Cetinje in 1912 to revive that policy with optimism. In preparing for it, first they established a special authority in the occupied zones with an Albanian population; this power had all the features of a military administration (2) and was sanctioned juridically by the so-called decree on the regulation of liberated zones. Promulgated with the signature of the King in 1912, this decree was a word-for-word copy of "the Provisional Law on the Regulation of Liberated Regions" brought out after the annexation of Toplica and other regions in 1878, (3) under which the police and military operators received a free hand to oppress and persecute the Albanians who opposed the new state.

From 1912 on, the military administration became for Belgrade one of the most preferred state and juridical forms in Kosova, especially in the first period after each occupation or reoccupation of the Province. Its main purpose was to maintain and strengthen the occupation regime and to bring about a gradual change in the ethnic balance of the places inhabited by an Albanian majority, by means of physical liquidation, oppression, terror, and mass expulsion.

On October 24, 1912, before the military occupation had been extended to the whole of Kosova, the Staff of the General Command of the Serbian army ordered its units to continue the military actions and to "disarm" the Albanian population, while at the same time arming the Serbians. Meanwhile, the commander of the Serbian 3rd Army and chief of Narodne Odbrana, (4) General Boza Jankovic, insisted that Belgrade give him special authority to repress Albanians in Kosova so that they would give up any resistance. (5)

A Serbian social-democrat paper, *Radnica novine*, listed blood-curdling examples of the terror and violence against Albanians, the plunder of their shops, homes and granaries, and the devastation of villages; it pointed out that no one had felt the fury of "liberators" so strongly as the innocent Albanians. (6) Apart from being the victims of large-scale massacres, the Albanians were given insulting and humiliating epithets by the Belgrade press, which painted them as backward and savage plunderers who did not accept progress and who must be ruled and kept down. (7)

Apart from killings and imprisonments, the occupiers also forced people to change their names and surnames and the names of their villages. They also compelled the overwhelmingly Moslem Albanians to convert to the Serbian Orthodox religion. (8) Edith Durham gives an



eye-witness account of this bloody terror, "From the conquered districts came piteous reports of the hideous cruelties which Serb and Montenegrin alike were committing on the Albanian populations. Far from concealing their deeds, the conquerors boasted of them. A Serb officer nearly choked with laughter as he told how his men had bayoneted the women and children of Ljuma. And one of the Petrovitches boasted to me that in two years no one in the conquered lands would dare speak 'that dirty language' (Albanian). Moslem men were given the choice of baptism or death, and shot down. The women were unveiled, and they and the children driven to church and baptized. 'On one generation we shall thus Serbize the lot!' they said. And later evidence proved that these reports were true." (9)

The rate of deportation increased especially after the introduction of a completely arbitrary fiscal system. At the beginning of 1914, the Serbian social-democratic press stated, among other things, that the military-police rule deliberately imposed, on Albanians, intolerable taxes and levies which were heavier than those under the Ottoman Empire before 1912. Faced with this situation, some Albanians decided that they had no choice but to abandon their own territories (10) and go to the interior of independent Albania, or especially to Turkey. During 1913 alone, hundreds of families had to leave Plava and Gucia, Peja and Gjakova for Albania. (11) Thousands from the districts of Dibra were driven out by the terror and violence that erupted after the suppression of the uprising of September 1913 and settled in the Central Albanian districts of Tirana and Elbasan. (12) Besides encouraging departure for regions in independent Albania, the military authorities also sent scores of Albanian families deep into regions with a compact Slav population. The families of insurgents who fought in *çeta* against foreign occupation were special targets. In many cases, the villagers who gave aid and shelter to the fighters of *çeta* were also deported. In this way the military tried to quell the Albanian armed resistance against the occupiers.

The years 1912 to 1915 mark the beginning of Serbian and Montenegrin efforts to disperse Albanians wherever they lived in compact groups. Because of their religion, the most suitable country for Albanian deportees was Turkey. Serbia and Montenegro tried to negotiate with Turkey for the removal of a maximum number of Albanians. From April to June 1914, according to figures from Montenegrin sources, more than 12 000 people had been deported to Turkey through the port of Tivar from the regions occupied by Montenegro alone. Meanwhile, the Austro-Hungarian counsellor reports for the same period put the number of deportees to Turkey from Montenegro at about 16 500. (13)

From the Serbian occupied regions, until the end of April 1914, according to incomplete figures, more than 40 000 persons (14) emigrated through Shkup. In April 1914, the newspaper *Radnicke novine* wrote that the trains leaving Shkup every day for Turkey were packed with Albanian refugees who had to shift mainly because of the insecurity of their lives. (15) The Serbian government imagined that the number of Albanians removed from regions it had occupied in 1912 should reach tens of thousands more than the number of those who had moved up till that time; thus, it hoped to create suitable economic and political conditions for a rapid colonization by Slav inhabitants of the areas vacated by the deportees. In March 1914, Nikola Pasic, prime minister and foreign minister of Serbia, admitted that the Serbian government foresaw the settling of 250 000 Serbian economic emigrants returning from America. (16)

The government agencies supervising the deportation of Albanians to Turkey had special instructions for completing the documentation for deportation in the shortest possible time. This was done to avoid even the slightest prolongation of the procedure of deportation, especially in cases involving tens of families. One such example was that of 31 Albanian families from Buzovik village of Vitica district, when the documents for more than 200 people going to Turkey were issued within a few days. (17) The same thing occurred in other districts, too.

Up to the start of the First World War, based on the figures of Yugoslav writers.



estimates show that, for these causes, the Albanian population of Kosova had suffered an appreciable reduction in numbers, amounting to more than 60 000 people; this does not include the thousands lost during the terror and mass killings. Meanwhile, many Kosovar scholars claim that the change in population in Kosova alone for the ten-year period, 1910-1920, was much greater than this. From about 475 000 inhabitants in Kosova in 1910, there was a total of 439 000 in 1920. Taking into account the natural increase, it means that the total had been reduced by about 150 000. Analysing this reduction in Kosova, these scholars note that the main reason for this diminution was deportation. (18)

The First World War up to 1918 temporarily interrupted the mass emigration of Albanians to Turkey. However, immediately after 1918, the newly formed Serbo-Croat-Slovene state placed expulsion on the agenda again. The Serbians in the key positions in the new kingdom hoped to achieve within a relatively short period the denationalization and Slavization of Albanians. Nikola Pasic, prime minister and best-known representative of the Kingdom, declared that, in the first decades of the 20th century, the problem of Albanians in the state of the southern Slavs could be easily solved in about 20-25 years through their assimilation, "from both the cultural and national stand-points", provided that the necessary peace existed within the state and international relations. (19)

The reoccupation of Kosova and other Albanian regions by the Serbian army in the autumn of 1918 brought about the revival of a special political-administrative apparatus controlled and supervised directly by the military. The military administration applied open and continuous pressure to drive out the Albanians through the open terror and bloody massacres committed by the military detachments, the gendarmerie and the *cetnik* bands.

Under the pretext of pursuing Albanian fighters opposed to the occupation and the denial of national rights, the army tortured and killed thousands of innocent Albanian men, women, and children, looted and burned their homes, and stole their livestock in scores of villages. According to secret reports of the police of the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, between 1919 and 1924, about 2 000 Albanian patriots had been killed in Kosova, while, from 1924 to 1927, this figure rose to 3 000. The *cetnik* bands of Milic Krstic, Kosta Pecanc and Sava Lazarevic and others perpetrated massive massacres and hideous crimes in the region of Llap, in Peja and Ferizaj, in Shtimje, and in Dumnica, Plava, Gucia to force Albanians to leave. (20) In February 1919, the newspaper *Populli*, organ of the "Committee for the National Defence of Defence of Kosova", remarked that in the districts of Plava and Gucia the repeated attacks on Albanian villagers had been stepped up by the *cetnik* bands of Serbian and Montenegrin chauvinists who, equipped even with heavy armaments, had burned villages and executed the inhabitants. (21) In a report drawn up in the early 1920s about the activity of the police, the prefect of the region of Prizren commented, among other things, that "the gendarmes beat the Albanians with the aim of making them leave..." (22)

To increase the pressure and insecurity and to speed up the removal of the Albanians, the police undertook the so-called disarmament in Kosova and other places. These large-scale punitive operations in the provinces of the Kingdom with Albanian population were accompanied with countless massacres and were justified by saying that "public security in those parts is not good". The real aim of these operations was pointed out clearly by the prefect of Peja in a report to the Ministry of the Interior, in which he stressed that it was necessary to intimidate and demoralize the Albanians "regardless of whether or not weapons would be found ...", so that, later, "the desired effect of the mass removal of Albanians" would be achieved. (23)

From 1918 to 1928, the searches for the seizure of weapons were normal and organized almost every year, especially in the most difficult period of winter, so that people could not leave their own homes and villages. The disarmament organized in the winter of 1920-1921 became one of the bloodiest massacres of Albanians in the period 1918 to 1941. It commenced in the district of Llap and then extended to other regions. The army and the units of the



gendarmerie acted simultaneously in scores of villages, arresting, torturing and killing the men, massacring old people, women and children, and burning houses. In the zone of Llap, the villages of Sharban, Prapashtica and Bellopoja were wiped out with artillery fire and the inhabitants mercilessly exterminated. In the Peja-Istok zone "the killings and burnings which the regular military troops committed were incalculable." In scores of villages the army tortured the inhabitants and left them naked in the winter snow "for hours on end, facing the bayonets and barrels of rifles." (24) The terror was especially severe and the crimes more atrocious in the regions on the border with independent Albania, where the army and the gendarmerie committed "the greatest massacres of the Albanian population of those parts, shooting and bayonetting people to death, looting, and raping women..." (25)

A direct consequence of this genocide was the forced emigration of thousands of Albanians. In the vicinity of Shkodra alone, at the beginning of February 1919 and some time afterwards, about 5 000 Albanians had fled from Rugova, Plava and Gucia, while in the early 20s, about 2 000 others had left the regions of Gjakova and Peja. Up till May 1923, some tens of thousands of Albanians had shifted from Kosova, Tetova, Kumanova and Shkup, and, as reports of the time stated, "the wave of emigration is continually increasing ..." (26) According to the estimates of the Turkish consulate in Salonica, the number of escapees from the territories of the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom to Turkey, between the years 1918-1923, amounted to 30 or 40 thousand. The overwhelming majority was peasants from parts inhabited by Albanians. (27)

Along with the "disarming" operations against the Albanian population, the military administration in Kosova and other places took measures to arm Serbs and Montenegrins, especially the colonists who, under special decrees, had begun to pour into the Albanian regions. According to the secret order of the special commissar for the so-called southern Serbia, an area in which Belgrade also included places with an Albanian population, by June 30, 1920, all the male Serbs from 18 to 45 years of age had been armed. The army organized bands from their ranks and put them under the command of its officers and the gendarmerie in each region or district. (28) At the same time, the command of the military division in Kosova, through a topsecret circular, ordered the prefects of the districts to concern themselves with the arming of the Slav nationals along with the disarming of the Albanians. The circular also stressed that the military commands of each district had to create special units to carry out beatings and tortures and, thus, to incite intra-national conflicts and create pretexts to exercise the most savage terror against Albanians. (29) Involved in the massacres against the Albanians were also chauvinists from the colonists, who collaborated with the military detachments and planned secret meetings with the representatives of the army and the gendarmerie. At these conspiratorial meetings, held mainly in the barracks of the gendarmerie, as the newspaper *Proleter* pointed out, plans were made to intensify the deportation and to eliminate the Albanians with more authority, who had become obstacles to the realization of Belgrade's plans. (30)

This propaganda in the press and other forms was intended also to generate among the Albanians a state of continuous tension, the result of which would be an increase in the numbers of those who left. The state circles and the propaganda of Belgrade presented all the Moslem Albanians as Turks. (31) The Kingdom's assistant secretary of Internal Affairs, Marko Cemovic, declared to the Belgrade press that in Gostivar, Tetova, Dibra, Kerçova and other regions around them, where the Albanians really constituted an overwhelming majority, there were no members of national minorities with the exception of "a handful of colonized Turks..." (32) Supporting this platform, the Serbian press demanded the removal, at all costs, of Albanians from what they called "southern Serbia" and supported and justified any means and methods to serve these aims. The Belgrade newspapers praised this policy by arguing that the state had to colonize these regions "with its own Christian elements who were in surplus in other parts of the country..." (33) The Serbian press stressed that one of the ways to guarantee



the successful and complete removal of the Albanians would be to regulate as quickly as possible the question of "their emigration to Anatolia..."(34) The Belgrade newspaper *Politika*, the main organ for articles with an anti-Albanian content, in an excess of unrestrained hysteria, urged all levels of state administration to complete precisely the task with which they had been charged: the expulsion of all the Albanians, a thing which would constitute a "patriotic merit."(35)

In these circumstances of hatred against the Albanians among the Slav public, especially that of Serbia, it was not at all difficult to manipulate public opinion and arouse fanatical Serbian and Montenegrin colonists in Kosova to hold meetings, rallies and demonstrations, where the removal of the Albanians was demanded under the slogan "Down with the Albanians, traitors of the state! We must drive them from here!" These rallies were followed by organized attacks on Albanians' homes, by mass beatings, and, finally, by the intervention of the gendarmerie which arrested, tortured and sentenced the Albanians to imprisonment and frequently even killed them. (36)

The Serbian ruling circles gave special attention to the composition of the government administration in Kosova and other Albanian parts. To the leading posts at all military, administrative and political levels Belgrade appointed its most trusted chauvinist elements, most of whom were corrupt individuals, notorious in the past for their anti-Albanian activity. The functionaries and state officials in Kosova like the prefect of Mitrovica, Petar Kunovcic, the prefect of Rahovec, Zaharia Preglevic and scores of others like them, boasted to their superiors of their exploits in eliminating the Albanians; they bragged about their contribution to the exercise of a pressure to deport thousands of people from their homes and to colonize Kosova with Slav settlers.(37)

The anti-Albanian undertaking of the administrative apparatus in Kosova and other places was helped by the open arbitrariness of the judicial organs; the judges and advocates were Serbs and Montenegrins who were active members of the notorious Serbian terrorist organizations "Narodna Odbrana", "Bela ruka", and others with their branches in different regions.(38) Not only did they never defend the Albanians who were oppressed, imprisoned and murdered, but on the contrary, they did everything they could to ensure that all trials went against them, especially in those cases when the question before the court related to factors which might lead to the deportation of the Albanian element. A significant indication of the anti-Albanian and chauvinist character of the juridical institutions in Kosova was the trials over blood feuds among the Albanians, which were dealt with in a way to keep up and even to increase the feuds and to encourage them to move away.

During 1918-1941, an entire apparatus with selected officials was created both to organize the so-called colonizing agrarian reform and to supervise the process of deportation. With branches in all the regions inhabited by Albanians, the centre of this agency was in Shkup. It is one of the main factors which, between the two world wars, made Shkup a transit centre from which the endless chain of tens of thousands of emigrants took the road for Turkey, mainly over the Shkup - Salonica railway and thereafter by ship or again by train to their destination.

In direct contact with the state administration for sending Albanians to Turkey, a number of semi-private agencies operated, too. They had spread their network through the small and large towns of Kosova and other Albanian parts. The best known of them was that called Sima Garma. (39) The agents of these companies carried their activities according to a special assignment and division of their tasks. Some engaged in propaganda to encourage emigration (by exploiting the difficult situation which the state apparatus created for the Albanian population). Others engaged in the formalities of the emigration and accompanied caravans of emigrants on the journey; still others took up the problem of the final settlement of emigrants after their arrival in Turkey. (40) The agencies engaged in the dispatch of the Albanians to Turkey turned into a real business and increased their profits from the unscrupulous robbery of



the Albanians. Involved in it were state and military officials, politicians, and in some cases, also members of the Yugoslav information service, "which strove to ensure that the deportation would continue at all costs..."(41) In order to facilitate and accelerate the work of agents involved directly in emigration, special dispositions were added to the state legislation so that Moslems could be granted their passport visas within 24 hours. These dispositions were utilized "especially in regard to the deportation to Turkey of members of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia."(42)

In these general circumstances of national oppression, political and social discrimination, and economic exploitation, tens of thousands of Albanian families had emigrated far from their native territory by the first half of the 1930s. Although complete and accurate figures about displaced Albanians have not been published, reports from various sources say that the number sent to Turkey up to the mid 1930s varied from 120000 to 150 000, (43) not including the more than 3 000 Kosovar families totalling about 12 000 persons who had to leave their ancestral lands and settle in Albania.(44)

Nevertheless, up till the mid 1930s, Belgrade had not achieved its goal to denationalize Kosova and other Albanian inhabited regions. At the same time, because of the high birth-rate, the absolute number of the Albanian population in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia steadily increased.

This was the main reason why circles in Belgrade began to seek new ways and means to attacks and, finally, wipe out the Albanians in the Kingdom. The task of drafting new programs and plans for this purpose was entrusted to the so-called "Serbian Club of Culture".(45) Included in this semi-state institution were elements of various strata and professions of Serbian society - politicians, top officials, military men, historians, economists, sociologists, publicists, who, by comparing individual ideas and proposals, would work out a unified platform on which the state apparatus would base itself in its anti-Albanian policy. The most right-wing organs of the Serbian press such as *Srpski glas* and *Nova Srbija* became the public mouthpieces of the "Serbian Club of Culture". By continually issuing chauvinist calls like "Serbs unite!" they tried to further incite the spirit of their hegemony in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The "Serbian Club of Culture" became an agency of Great-Serb chauvinism in Yugoslavia; its projects were accompanied with many articles and writings singing hymns of praise to the past of Serbia and preaching the superiority of Serbs over the others with a pronounced doze of racism.

In all the projects and ideas presented in the "Serbian Club of Culture", including those of Borivoje Panjevac, a top state official, Vasa Cubrilovic, Gjoka Perina, Orestije Krstic, Atanasije Uroseic, Milosav Jelic and many others, the stress was on stepping up the oppression and terror against the Albanian population as the main means to accomplish the denationalization of Albanian regions and their Slavization.

Those who discussed the reports in the "Serbian Club of Culture" also demanded that violent deportations of Albanians should continue in a more organized way and with greater intensity, and, along with it, large masses of Slav settlers should colonize Albanian lands.(46) The importance of this platform for the realization of the hegemonic aims of the Serbian circles emerges clearly from the conclusion which Gjoka Perina, one of their most fiery advocates, draws in his proposal. He stressed that, regardless of the means and methods used, the success of the final elimination of the Albanians in Yugoslavia would constitute "an immortal work for our people (the Serbs - Z.Sh.)..."(47)

The discussions of the anti-Albanian programs in the "Serbian Club of Culture" went simultaneously with the Yugoslav government holding a series of meetings of the ministries involved in the Albanian problem. At these meetings in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended by main representatives of that ministry, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of the Army and Navy, the Ministry of the Agrarian Reform, and the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Policy, it was decided that all these central bodies should operate in closest



collaboration with one another while utilizing all their levers to hasten the removal of Albanians to Turkey. To intensify deportation, concrete tasks were entrusted to the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army which used for its guideline one of the reports presented in the "Serbian Club of Culture". It was the report of doc. Vasa Cubrilovic, entitled *The Expulsion of the Albanians*, delivered on March 7, 1937, and government circles considered it the most complete material and the most suited to be put into practice.(48)

The ideas and proposals of Cubrilovic became the platform of the ruling circles of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia up to 1941. Pointing out their significance, the officials and functionaries of the Yugoslav state stressed that the economic, national and military danger to Serbia from the Albanians of Kosova and other parts had been analysed brilliantly in the studies a number of ideologists of the "Serbian Club of Culture" had done for several years on end, and one of the most outstanding of them was that of Vasa Cubrilovic.(49)

The value Belgrade placed on the Cubrilovic platform, as well as its special care to apply it as quickly as possible became quite clear after 1937, when the efforts of Yugoslav diplomacy over many years for a state agreement on the deportation of Albanians were finally concretized.

In the summer of 1938, Turkey and Yugoslavia signed a bilateral agreement in Istanbul, which opened the way for the removal of several hundred thousand "Moslems" from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to Turkey.(50) As a top-secret report of the Yugoslav representation in Ankara to the Foreign Ministry in Belgrade pointed out, its true aim was to deport the Albanian population. (51) The agreement defines the regions where the deportation would be applied. They were almost the same regions with Albanian population that Cubrilovic had described in his report as "the dangerous Albanian triangle".

While the public was being informed about this agreement, the propaganda and press in Belgrade was protesting that the number of deportees should not be 250 000, as the Yugoslav representatives were declaring, (52) but 400 000, and these should all be Albanians. (53)

The top military brass of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia considered the presence of a small Turkish minority in Yugoslavia as a very favourable opportunity to justify the expulsion of the Albanian population, regardless of the extremely small number of Turkish elements in Kosova-only a few hundred people. In this connection, the Zone Command of 3rd Army pointed out, in a proposal for action for 1938 it had made to superior organs, that the deportees to Turkey should include first of all "the Albanians of the border zone" with the Albanian state and then those of other regions, while the expulsion of a small Turkish group would be needed only "to facilitate the deportation of the Albanians..."(54) General Cemerikic, the zone commander of the 3rd Army, at the same time proposed that in regions like Rahovec, Suhareka, Podujeva, Vuçiterna, Gjilan and Kaçanik, where Albanians constituted a majority of 80 or 90 per cent, new military garrisons should be created to accomplish further the deportation of Albanians and the Slav colonization. This proposal stressed: "In regard to the deportation, this constitutes one of our very important problems ... We must try to break up the strong compact masses of Albanians as quickly as possible by introducing at least 50 per cent of our (Slav - Z.Sh.) population amongst them; without this the deportation cannot be considered to have been performed effectively..."(55)

In response to these proposals, in October 1938, the Yugoslav Ministry of the Army and Navy ordered that deportation should be carried on rapidly. Likewise, 150 stations of gendarmerie were set up in regions with a compact Albanian population, and they, together with the regular army, operated against the Albanians with the harshest brutality and terror, especially during the winters of 1938-1939, and 1939-1940. Under the pretext that Albanian uprisings against Yugoslavia were being prepared in Kosova and other places, actions for the seizure of weapons were planned, with large-scale massacres being committed against Albanians to compell them to emigrate to Turkey. Mobile detachments of the gendarmerie roved from village to village, imprisoning, beating and torturing innocent Albanians and leaving many of



them, after being tortured, in the streets; they warned the people "this is what will happen to all of you if you don't hand in your weapons and don't go to Turkey..."(56)

As a result of the systematic violence and terror by the state and the military detachments and the gendarmeries, from the second half of the 1930s to the last day of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the size of emigration increased rapidly. As secret reports of the government administration admitted, during 1936 alone, more than 2 000 Albanian families moved to Turkey, while in the following years, this number tended to increase because of the ever greater pressure that was exerted. Figures from official Yugoslav government sources show that, between the two world wars, from 1918 to 1941, the number of Albanians from Kosova and other regions going to Turkey was about 240 000, and, as well-informed people say "the number of Albanian emigrants from Yugoslavia to Turkey at that time was much greater."(57) If we add here the figure of Albanians who emigrated in 1912-1915, we can say that from the establishment of Serbian and Montenegrin rule in Kosova and other Albanian regions in 1912 to the capitulation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, at least 300 000 Albanians were forced to abandon their homes.

The consequences of the expulsion of Albanians were extremely grave and left their mark on the subsequent periods, too. The appreciable numerical diminution of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia was accompanied by the ruin and abandonment of hundreds of agricultural units and scores of villages. Traditional branches of the economy of the towns of Kosova and Albanian areas were hard hit. However, the most notable consequence the Belgrade regime brought about with full awareness, was the further widening of the gulf in intra-national relations in Kosova and other regions.



## NOTES

- 1 From 1918 to 1929 it was called the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom, while from 1929 to 1941 it was called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.
- 2 L.Rushiti, *The Socio-political Circumstances in Kosova 1912-1918*, Prishtina 1966, p.82; See also D.Jankovic, *Srbija i Jugoslovensko pitanje 1914-1915*, Belgrade 1973, pp. 78-79; *Oredjenje novin krajeva*, in "Pravda", July 31, 1913.
- 3 *Radnicke novine*, February 27, 1913, March 15, 1913.
- 4 A semi-legal Serbian terrorist organization which operated ceaselessly against Albanians up to 1941.
- 5 AVII, Belgrade, POP. II, K-17, p.7, DOC. 28/7, quoted from L.Rushiti, *The Socio-political Circumstances in Kosova 1912-1918*, Prishtina 1986, p.83.
- 6 *Radnicke novine*, November 9, 1913.
- 7 *Ibidem*, March 29, 1913.
- 8 M.Krasniqi, *Gjurme e gjurmime*, Prishtina 1979, p.111; L.Rushiti, *op.cit.*, pp. 139-141.
- 9 E.Durham, *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, London 1920, p.235.
- 10 *Radnicke novine*, April 28, 1914.
- 11 B.Babic, *Iseljavanje muslimana iz novih krajeva Crne Gore u prolece 1914 godine*, in : "Jugoslovenski Istorijski Casopis" nos. 1-4, 1978, p.311.
- 12 E.Durham, *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, London 1920, p.249. "At Tirana and at Elbasan I found thousands of destitute creatures pouring in, footsore and exhausted. Their accounts of Serb brutality up-country was amply confirmed ..."
- 13 B.Babic, *op.cit.*, p.314. See also P.S.Radusinovic, *Starovnistvo Crne Gore do 1945 godine*, Belgrade 1978, p.183.
- 14 *Ibidem*, p.314.
- 15 *Radnicke novine*, April 21, 1914.
- 16 V.Dedier-S.Anic, *Dokumenti o spolnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije*, knjiga 3, SV, 1, Belgrade 1980, pp. 476-477.
- 17 L.Rushiti, *op.cit.*, pp. 146-147.
- 18 A.Hadri, *The Position and Situation of Kosova in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941)*, in "Albanological Investigations", no.2, Prishtina 1968, p.178; Hakif Bajrami claims that in the period between 1913-1915 about 120 000 Albanians were deported to Turkey and partly to the independent Albanian state. (See H.Bajrami, *The Yugoslav-Turkish Convention of 1938 on the Deportation of Albanians*, in "Albanological Investigations", Series of historical sciences, no. 12, Prishtina 1983, p.243).
- 19 *Ibidem*.
- 20 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 123-124, 151-155.
- 21 *Populli*, February 25, 1919, Shkodra.
- 22 AVII, Belgrade, P.17, K.27, p.1, file 20; H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 139-140.
- 23 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p.112, 114.
- 24 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p.109, 113, 115.
- 25 Central State Archives, fund 251, year 1923, file 190, fasc.34.
- 26 *Ibid.*, file 215, fasc. 9-10.
- 27 *Ibid.*, file 113, fasc.16, besides them, large numbers of Albanians were forced to emigrate to Albania.
- 28 H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances...*, p.18.
- 29 AJ.S, 14, F.149/563, d.5165, quoted from H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances...*, pp. 118.



- 30 *Proleter*, January 20, 1930, February 15, 1930. Quoted from H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances* ..., pp. 156-157.
- 31 Central State Archives, Fund 251, year 1923, file 113, fascs. 28-29.
- 32 *Ibidem*, file 282, fasc.4.
- 33 *Ibidem*, file 206, fasc.48.
- 34 *Ibidem*.
- 35 *Hak*, September 29, 1923, Shkup. Quoted from H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances*..., p. 147.
- 36 *Proleter*, February 15, 1930. Quoted from H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances*..., pp. 156-167. See also the newspaper *Populli*, August 11, 1923, Tirana.
- 37 *Mitrovica and Its Environs*, Mitrovica 1979, p.167. Central State Archives, fund 351, year 1935, file 185/1, p.55.
- 38 Central State Archives, fund 251, 1930, file 194, fasc.13.
- 39 *Ibidem*, fasc.270.
- 40 *Ibidem*, year 1935, file 185/1, fascs. 75, 93-95.
- 41 *Hak*, January 30, 1924, Shkup. Quoted from H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances*..., p.150.
- 42 H.Hoxha, *The Policy of the Elimination of the Albanians From the Territory of Former Yugoslavia*, in "Perparimi", no.5, Prishtina 1970, p.442.
- 43 Central State Archives, fund 251, 1929, file 558, fasc.26, file 113, p.2. *Vullneti*, March 28, 1930.
- 44 *Ibidem*, fund 252, 1936, file 678, fasc.4.
- 45 H.Hoxha, *The Policy of the Elimination of the Albanians* ..., in "Perparimi", no.5, Prishtina 1970, p.433.
- 46 *Idem*.
- 47 AVII, P.17, K.69, F.4, D. 1 (*Problem narodnosti u juznoj Srbiji*). Quoted from A.Hadri, *The Position and Situation of Kosova* ..., in "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, p.179.
- 48 AVII, Belgrade, P.17, K.2-31, V.Cubrilovic, *Iseljavanje arnauta*, March 7, 1937. Extensive excerpts from this report have been included in this volume (p...).
- 49 H.Bajrami, *The Oppression and Resistance of Albanians in Kosova, 1929-1941*, in "Albanological Investigations", Series of historical sciences, no.9, 1979, pp. 183-184.
- 50 H.Bajrami, *The Yugoslav-Turkish Convention of 1938 on the Deportation of the Albanians*, in "Albanological Investigations", Series of historical Sciences, no.12, Prishtina 1983, pp. 258-265.
- 51 DASSIP. Fund: *Postanstvo u Turci*, F.31, d.11/9, pov. 1938 (See in this volume p....).
- 52 *Tan*, no.1151, July 13, 1938.
- 53 H.Hoxha, *The Policy of the Elimination of the Albanians From the Territory of Former Yugoslavia*, in "Perparimi", no.5, 1970, p.437. According to some sources, the number of Turkish population in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was not more than 60 000 - 80 000, while the official Yugoslav census of 1931, after countless manipulations, had set a total of 132 000 persons of Turkish nationality who, according to a statement of M.Spaho, a minister of Stojadinovic's government, "in no way want to go to Turkey..." (See Central State Archives, fund 251, file 70, year 1939, pp. 141-142).
- 54 AVII, P.17, K.26, F.3, D.50 (*Izvestoj III armijske oblasti*, no. 1859/38). Quoted from A.Hadri *The Position and Situation of Kosova* ..., in "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, p.180.
- 55 *Ibidem*.



56 H.Hoxha, *The Policy of the Elimination of the Albanians...*, in "Perparimi", no.5, 1970, p.440.

57 H.Bajrami, *The Political Circumstances ...*, p.177.



## **THE COLONIZING AGRARIAN REFORM IN KOSOVA AND THE OTHER ALBANIAN REGIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR**

The mass expropriation of the Albanian peasantry, along with its forced deportation, and the colonizing of its lands with Slav immigrants, were synchronized actions by the leading circles of Belgrade to create conditions for radically changing the ethnic ratio in the Albanian regions. They regarded this as the only guarantee for the perpetuation of their rule over Kosova and other annexed Albanian territories.

The seizure of Albanian lands in favour of Slavs began in 1878, when Serbia occupied Sandjak and Nis. In 1912, as the result of the First Balkan War, the theatre of operations shifted deeper into the Albanian territories. Despite the unstable political situation, within a short time, hundreds of families of Serbian and Montenegrin colonists penetrated into Kosova with the material and juridical support of the regime.<sup>(1)</sup> However, the process of expropriation and colonization reached its highest level between the two world wars, when Kosova and other Albanian territories, previously annexed by Serbian and Montenegro, were incorporated in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.<sup>(2)</sup>

After the First World War, the rural population in the Albanian regions in Yugoslavia was 90 per cent Albanian, with 10 per cent Slav minorities.<sup>(3)</sup> It consisted of large families which, in general, owned small or medium properties. According to figures about Kosova alone, two-thirds of family farms had only half a hectare of land.<sup>(4)</sup> Thousands of families belonged to the category of sharecroppers, while agricultural labourers and seasonal workers, who also generally were Albanian, made up a considerable number.<sup>(5)</sup> The class of big estate owners did not constitute more than one per cent of the total rural population, but they owned about 20 per cent of the farmland.<sup>(6)</sup> The density of the agrarian population per unit of cultivated land also was a burden on the peasantry of the Albanian regions.<sup>(7)</sup>

Only a democratic agrarian reform could solve the problem in the Albanian territories of Yugoslavia in such a socio-economic situation. However, the content of the "reform", carried out there after 1918, was determined by the political aims of the regime; therefore, it remained primarily a political undertaking with profound consequences from the national stand-point.

Although, in principle, the relative legislation was supposed to eliminate the leftovers of feudalism ("Preliminary provisions for agrarian reform", February 25, 1919), its implementation only partly changed the old relations. Generally speaking, it favoured the Serbian farmers and provided for preventing the Albanian farmers from gaining ownership over the land, while Albanian landowners were barred from the compensation to which they were entitled for their expropriated property ("The law on the regulation of agrarian relations in the former regions of southern Serbia and Montenegro" of December 5, 1931). Moreover, that part of the legislation which was intended to favour the colonization with the foreign Slav elements, while at the same time hitting all the classes and strata of the Albanian rural population, was most significant ("The Decree on the colonization of the Southern Regions" of September 24, 1920, and "The Law on the colonization of the southern Regions" of June 11, 1931). The colonists were given special treatment and privileged positions even in comparison with the Slavs who had long inhabited the Albanian territories. They were granted up to 50 hectares of land, the right of free transport up to the place of settlement, the free use of state or communal forests and pastures, duty-free imports, and freedom from any taxation for three years.



What the Belgrade regime sought to achieve in the Albanian territories through its colonizing agrarian reform was reflected in the views expressed by political parties, organizations, associations and state personalities. In essence, their views and theories did not differ from one another. Nikola Pasic, leader of the Radical Party and prime minister for many years, admitted that when the question of the struggle against the Albanians arose, the government and the opposition adopted the same position. (8) Pasic's admission confirms the fact that many in Belgrade considered the denationalization and Slavization of the Albanian territories normal and even essential. Even today such authors like Nikola Gacesa and Desanka Pesic stand in the same positions. Holding the view that colonization was a "return" of the Serbs to the "liberated" land, to which they had allegedly "historical rights" they are among the new disciples of denationalization of Kosova. (9)

Belgrade aimed at achieving the denationalization of Albanian territories through their settlement with Slav elements. The colonization was generally considered crucial for crushing the resistance of the Albanians. There were differences of views between different groupings only as to the tactics to be pursued or the means to be used to achieve this strategic goal more quickly, more easily and more surely. Hence, opinions varied only over how and where the expropriation of Albanians should take place, the ratio between the spontaneous colonization and the colonization programmed and financed by the state, whether the colonization should be partial or general, to what extent the various organs of state power should assist the land colonizing organs, which Slav elements should be used for colonization in different regions, and so on. There were differences also over other means to ruin the Albanians economically and break them psychologically, so as to step up their emigration to the maximum.

For example, in the report he sent on August 26, 1919 from Shkup to the Ministry of the Agrarian Reform in Belgrade, Streten Vukosavljevic, the first agrarian commissioner for the Albanian and Macedonian territories, recommended the settlement of groups of colonists first in those places "where the Albanian population was compact." (10) At the same time, he insisted on the arming of the colonists and the more active intervention of the police in support of the agrarian organs during the expropriation of the Albanians. This senior functionary believed that many ministries should increase their contribution to stepping up the pressure on the Albanian population. The successors to Vukosavljevic adhered to the same course. According to instructions from Belgrade, they devoted almost all their attention to the settlement of the Slav colonists on the lands seized from Albanians. About 22 years after the commencement of the "agrarian reform" in the Albanian territories, in March 1938, the minister of agriculture, Svetozar Stankovic, was to declare to the Skupstina that in "southern Serbia" the agrarian reform meant "only colonization". (11)

The colonizing agrarian reform, applied in Kosova and other Albanian territories, revealed its true character clearly during its concrete implementation. The lands of the families of the Albanian insurgents and political opponents of the regime, in general, became the first prey for the colonists, officials and various speculators. (12) Virtually in every village, the farms generally left uncultivated, belonging to "outlaws" or to those who sheltered and supported them, became subject to expropriation. But, frequently, the same thing occurred with the property of the inhabitants of villages near which the army detachments had encountered armed resistance. (13) In this way the confiscation began of all lands which were "abandoned" or deliberately described as such, along with the lands of Albanian enemies, although, according to the legal provisions, this could be done only with uncultivated state land. The agrarian organs did not hesitate to include in the "abandoned lands" those which had been left untilled for pastures or for the rotation of crops.

Gradually, from the first half of the twenties, the "reform" became a general campaign for the expropriation of the Albanian population. Numerous facts prove the collaboration between the police, agrarian and juridical organs and the colonists for the plunder and exploitation of the



Albanian peasantry. (14) The ignoring of the local traditional customary law on recognition of ownership which does not exist in written documents, had grave consequences for many families who were unjustly described as "usurpers" of land or big landowners. (15) The cadastral surveys also gave the opportunity for the seizure of all lands in excess of those declared by their owners. (16) The legislation on colonization created the possibility to expropriate anyone who could not prove his ownership to his own land before the colonists were settled in. Indeed, expropriation was quite inevitable, when the land was included within the areas earmarked for colonization. (17)

In these circumstances, the land was seized from Albanian families some of whose members had emigrated outside Yugoslavia, by placing it in the category of "abandoned" land. (18) Even those lands the Albanian peasants had bought in recent years from their emigrant compatriots were usurped as "abandoned" land for the complexes of colonization. (19) The Slav element, on the other hand, could secure legal recognition of any sort of purchase, including fictitious purchases, without difficulty. (20) At the same time, the colonists, who were installed on undeveloped fields, frequently made them arable with the labour of Albanian peasants. The Albanians had to contribute labour to build houses for the colonists and even to accommodate them "temporarily" in their own homes. It was not rare when the expropriated Albanian peasants became agricultural labourers or seasonal workers on their own farm to secure a livelihood. (21)

Because of such things, a heterogeneous mass of colonists arrived in the Albanian territories, although, as the French student Jacques Ancel noted, some of them had no reason to covet the land of others, because they were very well off economically in their former places of residence. (22) Many functionaries of the regime including Nikola Pasic, Jakov Cerbic, Vitimir Korac, and others, who appropriated thousands of hectares of land, employed these methods for their own enrichment. (23)

The fiscal organs made the condition of the Albanian peasants even more difficult. They were ready to seize the property of any Albanian who could not pay the extremely heavy taxes, up to three times the amounts required from the members of other nations, and they even demanded tax payment for the expropriated land on which the former owners worked as labourers for the colonists. (24)

Among the corrupt practices followed by all the officials of the administrative apparatus should also be noted the heavy fines, under the most absurd pretext and various forms compulsory labour; any attempt of a damaged Albanian peasant who demanded his rights was in vain. (25) Moreover, pursuing the case involved expenditure, while the plaintiff might be punished as an opponent of the regime. Even the principle of compensation according to legal provisions did not cover those who were officially recognized as damaged parties, and the former owner was considered lucky if he was offered any compensation in exchange. (26)

Beginning from 1920, the seizure of the commons of the Albanian peasantry on the pretext of taking over pastures and forests "in excess of the needs" of the peasants, was legalized. (27) These measures were general, as in the case of expropriation of the private land, and were extended to all the Albanian territories, but they were felt, first of all, by the small farmers, with a few acres of land for bread grain, who lived mainly on livestock-farming, especially in the zones where livestock-farming was crucial in rural economy. (28) So, the Albanians were deprived of the right to use the main forests and pastures, while the Slav colonists were given tracts of forests as their private property and the right to the use of state pastures and forests.

The amendments and supplements to the agrarian-colonization legislation during the thirties did not bring any essential change in the practice of the expropriation of the Albanian peasantry. The means and methods remained the same, while the new legal provisions gave full official sanction to and extended the expropriations on grounds of activities contrary to "state



interests". These provisions enabled the regime to expand the seizure of land further to all categories of the Albanian peasantry and to aggravate its measures of retribution against those who tried to oppose the seizure. The unprecedented arbitrariness during the seizure of the land, frequently together with the unharvested crops, and the frequent coordination of the violence of colonists with that of authorities, deprived many families from Novi Pazar to Manastir and from Ulqin to Presheva and Bujanova of any means or possibility of earning their livelihood.(29) In this context, the exercise of the right of ownership over private land was further restricted for the Albanian element. The agrarian authorities did not permit the purchase or sale of land without authorization; indeed, from time to time, they went so far as to prohibit the population of whole villages from working the land on the pretext of surveying it for purposes of "agrarian reform". (30)

In the second half of the thirties violence and arbitrariness were further intensified because of the revival of the chronic problem of denationalization of the Albanian territories. Since the results in this direction over many years were considered insufficient, the regime hastened to exploit the situation of temporary internal and external economic and political stability of Yugoslavia to settle accounts with Albanians once and for all. All the land in Kosova and other regions came under the "agrarian reform" and the legalization of sales and purchases and the confirmation of land ownership were suspended. (31) The properties of Albanians began, in general, to be included in the state land, while the minimum of 0.4 hectare per family member was not respected. In many cases, this minimum was located in unsuitable places and was inadequate to meet the minimal needs of livelihood. (32) It is obvious that, since the tendency was to further reduce the area owned by Albanians, nobody gave additional land to the thousands of poorer Albanian families who owned less than 0.4 hectare per member.

A fragment of the 1938 correspondence of Mehmet Spaho, one of the main political figures of Bosnia and the whole of Yugoslavia at that time, illustrates what was happening. In a letter to the minister of agriculture, S.Stankovic, he stated that "Agrarian authorities" in "southern Serbia" were acting in contravention of the provisions of the law "by proclaiming the land, in general, state land". M.Spaho went on, "All the fixed assets were taken from many thousands of families of the population there, thus they were left homeless and with nothing..." He continued, "To find land which comes under the agrarian reform, the field-plots of whole villages are reduced, and not only cultivated and uncultivated areas, but even houses and courtyards are included. And finally, "All this land was declared unused and was unjustly seized from the population... While (in exchange) non-productive land is given to them." (33)

What the Albanian population suffered from the Yugoslav colonizing agrarian reform between the two world wars was so grave and universal that the conclusion that "in Kosova war had been declared on the whole population, regardless of which class it belonged", is completely accurate; therefore, "all the Albanians were threatened from the national stand-point by the so-called agrarian reform in Kosova." (34) The Albanian peasantry with small properties suffered a heavy blow from the official colonizing agrarian policy, but Albanian agricultural labourers, seasonal workers, and sharecroppers also suffered. The agrarian courts refused to recognize their rights to lands which were earmarked for the complexes of colonization. Under a policy to denationalize Albanian areas, Albanian sharecroppers could not be treated differently from the Albanian peasantry, in general; therefore, the principles of legal provisions did not apply to them. Gradually, with the passage of years, only part of them managed to buy the land back from their owners. The others could not do this and were treated as temporary tenants of the state. (35) The Slav new owners or colonists tried to grab their land, forcing them to choose between their previous dependent position and emigration.(36)

An example of what happened to the Albanian farmers is the case of Laplesella, a village on an estate near Prishtina. Until 1912, 19 Serbian and 100 Albanian families had worked there as sharecroppers and agricultural labourers. Later, another 48 Serbian and 27 Albanian families



from Ajvalia settled there as sharecroppers. However, as a result of massacres and deportations during Serbian rule in Kosova before and after the First World War, the Albanian farmers got wiped out, while the Serbian families took over the 300 hectares previously worked by the Albanian families. Thus, during 1918-1930, on the above-mentioned estate 72 Serbian families took possession, of 5-45 hectares of fertile land each. (37)

Between the two world wars, the only Albanian elements, who had to some extent the support of the authorities in Belgrade, were some beys who continued to own their estates worked by the Albanian farmers. For political purposes, the procedure of expropriating them was delayed, or they were paid some compensation. It is significant that, up to the Second World War in the Albanian territories in Yugoslavia, most of the property of the big landowners was expropriated, while it remained untouched in other regions. (38) However, the Albanian peasants did not gain anything from the reduction in the number of wealthy Albanian landowners from the feudal class and the bourgeoisie and also from the Moslem and Catholic clergy. In general, it was the Slavs, mainly the colonists, and then the local Slav minority, not excluding the institutions of the Serbian Orthodox church, which gained from it. (39)

The final results of the colonizing agrarian reform in the Albanian regions of Yugoslavia are quite significant. According to data from the Albanian representation in Belgrade, from 1919 to the end of 1938, in all these territories about 400 000 hectares had been taken for the needs of "the reform". (40) The report of the Supreme Agrarian Directory of Shkup, dated November 11, 1940, mentioned that the agrarian directories of Peja, Ferizaj, Mitrovica, Prizren and Shkup, in almost the whole of the Albanian and the Macedonian territories, had 381 245 hectares of land. Of this area, 228 080 hectares were in the agrarian commissariats of Peja, Ferizaj, Mitrovica and Prizren. (41) Thus, according to official Yugoslav figures, three quarters of the total area expropriated in "the southern regions", where the Supreme Agrarian Directory of Shkup operated, had been taken from the Albanian population.

In order to give a more concrete idea of what the offensive on the Albanian farming population during 1919-1940 represented, suffice it to mention that, in 1939, the total cultivated area in Kosova amounted to 497 384 hectares. (42) The "reform" there affected almost fifty per cent of it, of which four fifths belonged as private or common property to the Albanian farmers, and only one fifth to big landowners. Meanwhile, the Serbian minority, even after its reinforcement with the newly arrived colonists, did not amount to more than 34 per cent of the population. (43)

The number of the Albanians affected by the results of the "reform" is also significant. Within two decades, the private property of about 450 000, or almost half the Albanian rural population, excluding the emigrants, suffered a heavy economic blow without precedent. (44) On the other hand, some of the Slav population, local or colonists, which benefited, gained privileged dominant positions in the countryside of the Albanian regions.

Figures on colonization complete the picture of the "reform". According to Yugoslav statistics, during 1918-1940, in the territory of "the southern regions" over which the agrarian directories of Peja, Ferizaj, Mitrovica, Prizren and Shkup, extended their activity, 17 879 households of colonists were settled. (45) Of them, 13 393 households, with about 60 000 members, settled on the lands of Kosova. (46) Thus, Kosova alone received 75 per cent of the colonists. In general, the Albanian territories experienced the colonization six to seven times more intensively than the Macedonian territories, although the areas were more or less equal.

Similar ratios can be seen in other indices of the practice of colonization. Thus, of the 15 943 houses built for the colonists on the Albanian and Macedonian territories of the five agrarian directories mentioned, 13 261 were in Kosova alone. (47) In a report of 1942, Giorgio Lorenzoni, who investigated agrarian problems of Albanian and Yugoslavia, mentioned about 800 new colonies and points of colonization added to the former Slav settlements only in the Albanian territories, which were included in the Italian occupation zone one year earlier. (48)



Likewise, of 142 588 hectares which went over to colonists during the years 1919-1941, in the regions of the five agrarian directories, about 100 000 hectares lay within the present administrative borders of Kosova. (49) In all the Albanian territories, about five times more land was divided amongst the colonists than it was in the Macedonian territories.

Other figures, too, prove that the main emphasis was placed on the denationalization of Kosova and other compact Albanian areas by bringing in a new Slav population. During 1919-1941, about 40 per cent of the total number of colonists received land from the land colonizing organs and settled in the Albanian territory, while these territories did not constitute more than 7-8 per cent of the total area of the Kingdom and were noted for their rural overpopulation. (50)

The number of colonists recorded in the statistics of the land colonizing organs does not reflect the full flow of the Slav population from various parts of Yugoslavia. This is because the statistics give figures only for the newly arrived families who were given land by the competent organs, and not for those thousands of other families who came to the urban centres where they took up various occupations or lived on the salaries of the heads of families who were officials. Some fragmentary figures may indicate the dimensions of this kind of colonization. In Shkup alone, in 1936, there were 30 000 "non-local Serbian" inhabitants, who made up more than 40 per cent of the whole city; in the periphery of Shkup up till the end of 1941, not more than 10 000 persons had been settled by the land colonizing organs. Meanwhile, in Prishtina, there were more than 4 500 newly arrived Slavs, who made up 35 per cent of its population. (51) The situation was more or less the same for other urban centres, too. In 1923, the supreme agrarian commissioner, Dj. Krstic, pointed out that through colonization Shkup "has doubled its population", Presheva "has almost half of its houses Serbian", Peja "is full of colonists", while Ferizaj "they will soon dominate completely". (52) Thus, if all those who settled in towns without receiving land are added to the 85 000-90 000 colonists who gained land in all "the southern regions", the total number must be doubled. The opinion that about 200 000 colonists came to these territories between the two world wars is not unknown. (53)

The land colonizing policy the Belgrade ruling circles followed in the Albanian territories between the two world wars, as the above figures show, led to the unprecedented pauperization of the Albanian peasantry. Tens of thousands of families were compelled to leave their homeland to make room for the Slav newcomers. For its part, the economy was adversely affected, and its negative consequences lasted for a long time. Another result was the stirring up and exacerbation of national conflicts.

After the break-up of the Yugoslav Kingdom under the nazi-fascist attack of April 1941, some of the Slav colonists, who had come to the Albanian territories during the twenties-thirties, returned to their former residences. (54) Nevertheless, the situation which existed before 1918 was not re-established in the countryside. Meanwhile, the efforts of the fascist regime and the quisling administration to place the Albanians in their service by inciting them against the Slav minorities had no success.

The problem of the just and final solution of the question of land-ownership was primarily a political one, which remained unsolved after the Second World War. In April 1945, the delegates of Kosova presented their view of the Albanian peasantry directly to Tito personally. They told him that "it is just that first of all we who are there should take the land which we inherited from our ancestors", (55) implying that they condemned the land colonizing policy of the pre-war regime.

However, the re-examination of the "agrarian reform" in Albanian territories was closely linked with the efforts to renew the results of the pre-war "reform" on the question of colonization. In 1945, the full rights of colonists of 1918-1941 to return to the properties they had been granted in the past were recognized. (56) At the same time, the notorious Sretan



Vukosavljevic, the former top agrarian functionary for the Albanian and Macedonian territories in 1919, was placed at the head of the Ministry for Colonization. Meanwhile, Vasa Cubrilovic, compiler of the notorious reports of March 1937 and November 1944 on the deportation of Albanians, became a central figure in the Ministry of Agriculture.

The "Law on the agrarian reform" for Kosova and Macedonia was promulgated on August 3, 1945. Under it, colonists could not return to the private lands of local peasants, lands worked by sharecroppers, the lands the colonists did not work themselves, the lands left undeveloped by them, and the lands of former political emigrants (outlaws). The law also prohibited the return of those colonists who had served the old regime as gendarmes, officials, financiers, etc. On the basis of the law, the colonists who would lose the ownership of lands in Macedonia would be guaranteed the same in other parts of Yugoslavia, while, in Kosova, the affected colonists had to be given land in the vicinity. (57) However, even though the law deprived a certain number of colonists of the land gained before the war, the commission for the re-examination of the agrarian reform set up under the federal government ordered the return of all colonists to their pre-1941 lands and declared that only after this could the re-examination and the settlement of the debatable cases commence. (58) Likewise, the Ministry of Colonization did not approve the proposal that the colonists who had earlier gone to Vojvodina should not return to Kosova. According to it, only after taking the decisions would it be determined who would go to Vojvodina. (59)

The figures of the Regional Executive Council for 1947 show that in 11 168 agrarian conflicts which were examined, 4 829 colonist families received the full right of ownership, 5 744 lost it partly, while 595 lost it completely. Eventually 15 000 hectares of land, spread over Drenica, Istok, Peja, Gjakova, Rahovec, and Prizren, were returned to Albanians. (60) It should be added that the poor Albanian families did not get the lands of colonists who partly or completely lost their right of ownership, but a fund for colonization was created from these lands. The "poor colonists" and colonists who "lived individually dispersed among Albanian villages" benefited from this land. (61) As to the Albanian territories outside Kosova, the departure of pre-war colonists was compensated for by bringing in new colonists or transferring the land to the local Slavs. (62)

During the examination of the debatable cases over the right of ownership, the colonists generally emerged triumphant. Under the pretext that in the councils there were reactionaries or people who worked in the spirit of reaction, the leading organs, from provincial to federal level, annulled many decisions of the local state organs which initially had given the right to Albanian peasants.

A stand which affected the Albanian population was adopted also in connection with the legalization of purchases or sales carried out before the reform. While those made under fascist occupation were described as "carried out with threats and violence", therefore illegal and null and void. In general all the "purchases" of land which the colonists and other Slavs had made in the years of the Yugoslav Kingdom, were accepted. According to the post-war Yugoslav authorities, the colonists "had acquired the land in legal ways and there could be no talk of any kind of pressure", because in that time "there were only occasional cases of pressure which were unable to influence the buying and selling of land, in general." (63)

The all-round efforts of state organs at all levels to support and assist colonists with money, transport, building materials, food, up to the provision of houses ready to occupy, which had been built or repaired with the compulsory labour of the Albanian peasants, brought about the rapid restoration of the main pre-war situation in the colonization of Albanian territories. The Albanians were even forced to pay the colonists for the material damage they had suffered during the war. The abuses went so far that even the property the colonists had sold was returned to them on the ground that the sale had been made under duress. Even when the property had passed in the hands of third parties no account was taken of it. (64) Finally, to



complete the picture in the Albanian countryside in post-war Yugoslavia, the requisition of large quantities of agricultural and livestock products for purposes of assisting the colonization must also be noted. (65)

The special attention devoted after the war to the question of the Slav colonization of Albanian territories is sufficient to prove the similarity of the views of the new regime of Belgrade to these of the former regime about the treatment of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia. Meanwhile, the recent proposal of Serbia and the discussion in the Council of Socio-Political Relations of the Federal Chamber of the free return to Kosova of the pre-war colonists who were formally prohibited by the law of August 3, 1945, (66) show that 45 years of "unity, fraternity" between nations and nationalities have not been sufficient for Yugoslavia to free itself from its anti-Albanian preconceptions.



## NOTES

- 1 M. Obradovic, *Agrarna reforma i kolonizacija na Kosovu 1918-1941*, Prishtina 1981, p.27.
- 2 In 1918-1929 the Yugoslav Kingdom was called the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom.
- 3 Central State Archives, (CSA), fund 252, 1919, file 8, fasc. 4; A.Hadri, *Gjakova from its founding to 1941*, in "Kosova" no.1, Prishtina 1912, p.424.
- 4 L.Rushiti, *The Outlaw Movement in Kosova (1918-1928)*, Prishtina 1981, p.42.
- 5 CSA, fund 266, s.a., file 105, fasc.78-80; M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.225.
- 6 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.223, 225; H.Hoxha, *Elements of the Economic Pressure on Albanians in the Old Yugoslavia*, in "Perparimi", no.4, Prishtina 1970, p.313. In 1912 large estates had a wider extension, but the period which followed was characterized by their rapid disintegration.
- 7 H.Bajrami, *The Socio-Political Circumstances of Kosova, 1918-1941*, Prishtina 1981, p.24; M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.90.
- 8 H.Hoxha, *The Political Parties and Their Movements among the Albanians in Bourgeois Yugoslavia*, "Perparimi" no.12, Prishtina 1971, p.1008.
- 9 *Kosovo-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1988, pp. 91-99, 100-110.
- 10 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 53-54.
- 11 *Ibidem*, p.95.
- 12 L.Rushiti, *op.cit.*, pp. 37-39.
- 13 *Ibidem*, p.40, Dj.Krstic, *Kolonizacija na juznoj Srbiji*, Sarajevo, 1928, p. 52, 61.
- 14 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 52-53, 60, 63-64.
- 15 *Ibidem*, p.16, 63; H.Hoxha, *op.cit.*, "Pirparimi", no.4, Prishtina 1970, p.328.
- 16 CSA, fund 251, year 1930, file 194, fasc.335. *La situation de la minorité albanaise en Yugoslavie*. Petition sent to the League of Nations, May 3, 1930.
- 17 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p.30, 62, 65, 74, 85.
- 18 *Hak*, no.761, January 15, 1924, Shkup. See also M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.148.
- 19 In the case of sharecroppers only the right to use the land could be purchased.
- 20 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.148; see also M.Piraku, *Kulturno prosvetni pokret Albanaca u Jugoslaviji 1919-1941*, "Jugoslovenski Istorijski Casopis", nos.1-4, Belgrade 1978, p.363.
- 21 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p. 59, 63, 68, 81, 85, 88, 93.
- 22 J.Ancel, *La Macédoine*, Paris 1930.
- 23 A.Apostolov, *Kolonizacijata na Makedonija vo stara Jugoslavija*. Skopje 1966, p. 109, 185, 186; M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p.115.
- 24 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, pp. 85-86.
- 25 A.Hadri, *op.cit.*, in "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1969, Prishtina 1969, p.172, *Mitrovica and its environs*, Mitrovica 1979, p.129.
- 26 H.Hoxha, *op.cit.*, in "Pirparimi", no.4, Prishtina 1970, pp. 328-329. M.Meletic, *Kosovo, nekad i danas*, Belgrade 1973, p.183.
- 27 The decree on the colonization of September 24, 1920. Later the legislation on the limitation of state forests had an influence.
- 28 L.Rushiti, *op.cit.*, p.38; H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p. 56, 94.
- 29 CSA, fund 251, year 1934, file 142; *ibid.*, year 1935, file 185; *ibid.*, year 1936, file 165. Reports of diplomatic representatives from Belgrade, Shkup and Manastir to the Foreign Ministry in Tirana.
- 30 *Ibidem*.
- 31 *Ibid.*, fund 251, year 1938, file 107/02, fasc. 819-821, 873-875; original Yugoslav documents; see also H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, p. 158 and 246.



- 32 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p. 186, 231.
  - 33 A.Apostolov, *op.cit.*, p. 181, 183; see also D.Erakovic, *Kosova - Promised Land*, "Rilindja", July 19-24, 1989.
  - 34 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 18-31. See also T.Abdyli, *The Condition and Position of the Working Class in Kosova (1918-1941)*, Prishtina 1986, pp. 16, 24-26.
  - 35 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p. 81, 111, 113, 114, 115; M.Maletic, *op.cit.*, p. 185.
  - 36 H.Bajrami, *op.cit.*, pp. 56, 60, 63, 88.
  - 37 *Ibidem*, p. 78.
  - 38 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova and Metohija 1943-1953*, Prishtina 1955, pp. 95-96; H.Hoxha, *op.cit.*, "Pirparimi", no.4, Prishtina 1970, p. 327.
  - 39 CSA, fund 251, year 1930, file 194, fasc. 355; B.Boskovic-A.Apostolov, *Stav KPJ prame agrarnoj reformi i Kolonizaciji na Kosovu i Metohiji 1919-1941 godine*, "Kosova", no.1, Prishtina 1972, pp. 354-355.
  - 40 Central State Archives, fund 251, 1938, file 107/1, fasc. 342-343.
  - 41 A.Hadri, *op.cit.*, "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, Prishtina 1969, p. 167.
  - 42 *The People's Council ...*, pp. 269-270.
  - 43 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, pp. 128, 223, 225.
  - 44 CSA, fund 266, s.a., file 15, fasc. 1-2; *ibid.*, file 105, fasc. 78-80. AIH, file A-V-215.
- The figure is the result of calculations which take into consideration the birth rate, the death rate, and the emigration of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia.
- 45 A.Hadri, *op. cit.*, "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, Prishtina 1969, p. 167.
  - 46 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p. 120, 221, 223.
  - 47 A.Hadri, *op.cit.*, "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, Prishtina 1969, p.107; M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p. 170.
  - 48 G. Lorenzoni, *Rapporto sulla riforma agraria jugoslava con speciale riguardo ai territori interessanti l'Albania, la Dalmazia and la Crozia*, Firenze 1941.
  - 49 A.Hadri, *op.cit.*, "Albanological Investigations", no.2, 1968, Prishtina 1969, p. 167; M.Obradovic, *op.cit.*, p. 211.
  - 50 G.Lorenzoni, *op.cit.*, p. 141.
  - 51 CSA, fund 261, year 1941, file 93, fasc. 8-10; *ibid.*, fund 251, s.a. file 61, fasc. 255-256. Information for the council of Ministers and the Foreign Ministry.
  - 52 Dj.Krstic, *op.cit.*, p. 57.
  - 53 M.Piraku, *op.cit.*, "Jugoslovenski istorijski casopia, nos. 1-4, Belgrade 1978, p. 365; H.Hoxha, *op.cit.*, "Pirparimi", no.4, Prishtina 1970, p. 322.
  - 54 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Movement in Kosova, 1941-1945*, Prishtina 1971, p. 148. In the second half of 1941, 20 000 Serbs and Montenegrins had left Macedonia and Kosova.
  - 55 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, April 15, 1954.
  - 56 *Osnivacki Kongress KPS*, Belgrade 19872, p. 83.
  - 57 *Flaka e Villazirimit*, Shkup, August 10, 1975, p. 6.
  - 58 *The People's Council ...*, p. 104, report to the work of the Regional Executive Council delivered at the 3rd meeting of the 1st legislature of the people's council of this region (June 16-17, 1946).
  - 59 M.Obradovic, *Revizija agrarne reforme na Kosovu*, in : "Kosova" no. 3, Prishtina 1974, p. 392.
  - 60 *The People's Council ...*, pp. 161-162.
  - 61 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, July 28, 1946, p.1.
  - 62 *Ziri i popullit*, October 29, 1949.
  - 63 M.Obradovic, *op.cit.* "Kosova", no.3, Prishtina 1974, p. 403.



64 Rilindja, Prishtina, January 6, 1946, p. 5.

65 The People's Council..., p. 28, 64, 157.

66 Rilindja, Prishtina, November 2, 1986, p.8; *ibid.* May 11, 1989, p. 4.



Dr. LIMAN RUSHITI

(Prishtina: Yugoslavia)

## THE OUTLAW MOVEMENT IN KOSOVA (1918-1928) (\*)

The outlaw movement in Kosova in the decade 1918-1928 is that of the broad popular masses based on the traditions and struggles of the Albanian people for national freedom.

It is a continuation of the Albanian struggle against foreign rulers through the centuries, and it was waged by organized groups known among people as *çeta*. The national character of this movement was established, first of all, in the wars against the Ottoman Empire and, after 1912, continued in new conditions against the actions of new rulers, the Great-Serb bourgeoisie, which, right from the outset, earned the indignation and anger of the entire Albanian population.

During the decade beginning from October 1918, the national liberation outlaw movement passed through several phases, experiencing ebbs and flows. These were expressions of the conditions in the Serbo-Croat-Slovene monarchy, as well as the international political situation as a whole.

The outlaw movement of Kosova underwent four main stages, beginning with the establishment of the police-military regime in October 1918 and continued up to 1928.

The *first phase*, from October 1918 until March 1919, is characterized by the local resistance of *çetas* against the establishment of the police-military regime and administration of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie.

Since the establishment of state organs - the police and military rule - there was a resistance from Albanian *çetas* which saw that the Great-Serb bourgeoisie would continue the policy of 1912-1915. At first people resisted locally and opposed the consolidation of state power; at the same time, they defended themselves against the actions of the army and the conscripted population - the *çetniks*. Early in 1919, people strengthened their resistance which assumed a popular character against the Great-Serb bourgeois state power.

In the *second phase*, from March 1919 to the end of 1921, the resistance spread widely and became a general movement with more organized forms of struggle. This phase was influenced by the revolutionary and democratic ideas of the October Revolution, which were expressed in the demands of leaders of the movement, not only in 1919, but throughout its course.

The movement became more popular in April-May 1919, when the general uprising began. From that time, it operated under a central command.

In April 1919 it had become an organized general movement, and this character became even more pronounced in the insurrection of May 1919. Planned for the whole territory of Kosova, this rebellion did not break out in all places at the same time and with the same intensity. It occurred first in Drenica, while its culminating and bloodiest battle was fought in Llapush. It continued through to mid-June 1919 and was put down by large military forces of the gendarmerie and *çetniks*.

After the suppression of the insurrection, massacres were perpetrated against the peaceful population, not only in the rebellious towns but also in other parts of Kosova. These massacres added to the hatred against the Great-Serb government.

The outlaw movement was an authentic national liberation movement. Its leaders emerged from the *çetas* without the support of the gentry or appointment by any organ, but were chosen by the *çetas* themselves. This was true for all their leaders. All the *çetas* accepted



Azem Bejta as commander-in-chief and fought under his name in several places at the same time, because he had distinguished himself with his authority at the head of the *çeta* of Drenica where the revolt was more widespread. On the other hand, his contacts with Hasan Prishtina and Bajram Curri also influenced this.

Even after the suppression of the insurrection, the number of *çetas* and fighters increased. The ranks included not only experienced fighters of the early years, but also a large number of young men capable of fighting. Thus, it became a movement of broad dimensions.

Having become widespread and intense, the fighting continued. This is why the Government of the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom engaged large military forces and others in Kosova, especially from early 1920 when it undertook large-scale actions to disarm the population.

The state acted in the winter of 1920 for fear that in spring a new and much wider insurrection than that of 1919 might break out. This aggression continued without interruption until June.

Even after this action, the government engaged large military forces and the gendarmerie in Kosova and in other regions inhabited by Albanians in the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom. Likewise, it operated on the border with Albania which it wanted to occupy. Thanks to the unsparing aid the people gave it, the outlaw movement never ceased its armed attacks all over Kosova against the fairly large units of soldiers and gendarmes that were always present. Its guerrilla tactics helped it to carry on the fighting successfully.

In 1920, the movement was so powerful that, in November of that year, besides the large military forces equipped with heavy weapons, the government also used aircraft.

At the end of 1920, the revolt began to pacify as a consequence of a strong pressure exerted by the state organs both on the movement and the population. The departure of most *çetas* to spend the winter in the territory of Albania, also, contributed to it. At the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921, the state took advantage of the absence of *çetas* and employed such ferocious measures against the Albanian population as the burning of whole villages and the interning of families. As a result, for a short time, there was a decline in the number of fighters and a lull in the fighting, but nevertheless the struggle continued.

In the spring of 1921, the movement suffered a decline because of the military actions against the peaceful population of Kosova. The amnesty and the other measures were factors in this ebb, which did not last long, because, despite the amnesty, the state organs imprisoned and killed any outlaws who surrendered.

In June 1921, they prepared for a general uprising. The state discovered it and engaged large military forces to crush any resistance from the outset. It deployed armies to pursue the *çetas* from all directions. On several occasions, the army invited Azem to talks with them. A military force pacified the population of Kosova, but the intervention in Mirdita and other places on the border of Albania aroused international opinion. The intervention of the League of Nations brought about the formation of a "neutral zone" of Junik in November 1921.

Within the creating of the "neutral zone" of Junik, the military reduced the intensity of its actions, because many fighters went there. Even during the existence of this zone, the movement carried on. It organized *çetas* for further fighting. It consolidated them and strengthened contacts with those from other regions outside Kosova; the *çetas* increased their attacks for national rights against the anti-popular regime.

The "neutral zone" of Junik, which existed for more than 14 months, provided the only sanctuary where the fighters of the National Liberation Movement of Kosova could live freely. In 1922, they were active there; from this zone they undertook many military raids against the government organs of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie. Although many of the *çetas* and their leaders spent most of the time in that zone, it did not mean that the movement had decayed. From this zone they planned attacks and crossed over to Kosova to carry them out. A considerable number



of them had remained and still operated in Kosova.

Taking advantage of the absence of *çetas* and their main leaders, the state attempted to divide the masses from the movement, but it succeeded only with a small number who had stood aloof from the movement because of personal interests, and with a group of individuals who had previously collaborated with the government.

The movement hindered the Great-Serb bourgeois government from conducting its oppressive plans towards Kosova; hence, in June 1922 the state planned armed actions in the "neutral" zone to liquidate the rebellion.

The Zogite feudal-bourgeois state opposed to this movement because of its democratic orientation. Thus, in January 1923, because the *çetas* took part on the side of the democratic forces in the uprising led by Bajram Curri and Hasan Prishtina, the government in Tirana intervened against the rebels in the neutral zone, too. The bourgeois government of the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom sent in armed forces, and this eliminated the neutral zone.

After the elimination of the "neutral zone", the movement, now weakened, continued the struggle in Kosova under extremely bad conditions.

The *third phase*, July 1923-July 1924, saw a change of the tactic of *çeta* of Azem Bejta, and the liberated zone in Dumnica-Zagorth of Mehmet Konjuhi were formed. In this phase, both the opposing sides carried on diplomatic activities.

The reasons which persuaded the main leaders of the movement to agree to talks with the representatives of the state organs were: the pacification of part of the Albanian population through the use of violence and the persecution of the movement by the governments of the Great-Serbs and the Albanian bourgeois landowners.

The leaders of the movement participated in the talks; they reached an agreement with the bourgeois state organs of the Serbo-Croat-Slovene Kingdom to strengthen the ranks of the movement and to ease the pressure on the people. In this way, they restored the trust of the Albanian people in the movement, and, through their propaganda, helped prevent the removal of the Albanian population from Kosova.

The formation and autonomy of the free zones was an immense success for the movement. The existence of a "state within a state" speaks of the strengths of the movement and the support given by the people. The large number of fighters for national freedom in the *çetas* also demonstrates its national liberation character. The case of Azem Bejta, a national tribune, also testifies to this.

In the *fourth phase*, July 1924-1928, the state forces destroyed the free zones, killed Azem Bejta and many other leaders of *çetas*, weakened the national liberation outlaw movement in Kosova, and broke up the organized movement. The movement continued to fight with small *çetas*, putting up resistance here and there until 1928. At that time, many *çetas*, which had continued to fight against the Great-Serb bourgeoisie by staying in Kosova or by going back and forth to Albania and returning to Kosova from time to time, were destroyed.

The national liberation outlaw movement of Kosova lost after 10 years of struggle for national liberation against the Serbian bourgeois state. It was the heavy fire power of the enemy which overcame the movement.

#### NOTE

\* Excerpts from the monograph *Levizja kaçake ne Kosove (1918-1928)*, (The Outlaw Movement in Kosova), Prishtina 1981.



## EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS

### ATROCITIES IN ALBANIA (\*)

As soon as the order on the general mobilization was issued, we expressed our doubts about the terrible things that would follow in Albania with the suppression of the insurrection. We have collected data about hideous things, because with our own eyes we have seen how the soldiers join the army grinding their teeth and how they are trained to vent their anger and indignation about being sent to a new massacre on the heads of the unfortunate Albanian people, instead of on the real main culprit, on the *Serbian Government*, which is totally to blame for the remobilization, either because from *carelessness* it made possible the passage of Albanian insurgents into our territory, or because it *deliberately* brought matters to such a point that it could invade Albania and demand "strategic points".

However, reality went beyond our premonitions, although they themselves were terrible. We receive evidence from many parts about the atrocities which had been committed in Albania, while a good and trusted friend of ours wrote to us yesterday, saying:

"Dear ...

"I have no time to write at length. I can say that terrible things are happening here. All this makes my blood curdle and I wonder over and over again how it is possible that a man can be such a barbarian and do such things. This is terrible, horrendous! I do not dare and have no time to write extensively. I can say that Luma no longer exists. Everything has been turned into corpses, ashes and dust. There were villages with 100, 150 or 200 households in which absolutely no one was left alive. No one, I tell you! They rounded up 40 to 50 people and slaughtered them all with knives. Ordinary looting is carried out everywhere. The officers seized hold of whole flocks of livestock and put their soldiers to sell them in Prizren..."

This friend *tells us even more terrible things*. But they are so horrible and bloodcurdling that we *do not dare* to publish them. We do not dare to publish them simply because we cannot *believe* them, although this friend of ours is serious and objective. However, we are not going to be content with this. As soon as we have the opportunity and the possibility, as soon as many more participants in this terrible Albanian tragedy return, we shall verify all this information and gather new information if any. After this we will mercilessly expose all the terrible things which have been done at the inspiration of Serbian officers and the Serbian Government. We will bring them to light not only before our small public, but before the whole of European opinion, will publish them through the numerous and powerful organs of the socialist press in all countries, so that, in this way at least, we will take vengeance on the insatiable plunderers in the staffs of the Government, and exact retribution for the children massacred and insulted throughout Albania!

We have been more considerate than could have been demanded of us. We want to put an end to this. Justice and truth require this; the moral interests of our Party demand this: by raising our energetic and public accusation against all these terrible things, we will automatically separate ourselves from this bourgeois environment and prove that this country, nevertheless, is not completely crazy and ruined, and that, at least, one civilized political party exists in it - social-democracy, and, at least, one cultured class - the proletariat!

#### NOTE

\* Taken from *Radnicke Novine*, organ of Serbian social-democracy, no. 212, October 9, 1913.



## WILL IT NEVER END ... ?

There are moments when a man would not like to be right. Sometimes one makes a prophecy, but in himself he hopes that it will not turn out to be true.

As we write this, we are thinking to ourselves about what we have said about the Albanian question. As soon as the first expedition was dispatched, we energetically raised our voice against the experiment of our ruling circles, about which it is hard to say whether it is just crazy or even worse. During the subsequent events not for one moment we ceased raising our voice against the whole policy towards Albania and the Albanians, while at the same time proposing and demanding that Serbia's stand should be corrected, and at least, at the last moment what could be saved should be saved. Utterly in vain. No one listened to us. That metaphor of the New Testament about *the voice of him who is crying in the wilderness* never found clearer expression than in the case of our Party, which raised its voice aloud against the barbarous policy pursued towards the Albanian people.

But we didn't only criticize. We showed our bourgeoisie the dangers and crises that would result from its policy towards Albania. We have warned that we will have an Albanian uprising every spring, as long as our attitude towards the Albanian is governed with the methods of Xhavit Pasha and Turgut Pasha. Our prophecy turned out right on the mark; what we were afraid, and what we would have preferred not to be so, has occurred.

In Drenica, a centre of the Albanians of Kosova, the insurrection burst out. Detailed reports are not yet available. However, there is not the slightest doubt that this is a big movement, because the organs of the state and the military troops in the neighbourhood were unable to suppress it and sought assistance from Shkup. This, too, might have been expected. The population there is one of the toughest and irrepressible of the whole Albanian people.

Bourgeois opinion will be interested only in the development of this uprising and the speed with which it can be suppressed. As far as our opinion is concerned, the Albanian question will be removed from the agenda with the burning of the last village and the killing of the last child in Drenica. The Philistine will snore again in comfort - if after a short time he is not woken from his sweet sleep by the rattle of rifle fire and the roar of canon in Kosova, in that marvellous fertile valley of which it is written that it is to be planted with the bones of men instead of fruitful seed, and watered with warm blood instead of water.

The indifference of the bourgeois world to these bloody feuds is understandable up to a point. It suffers little from them, and usually indirectly. But the world of the workers of Serbia, on whose shoulders fall all the burdens of these terrible expeditions, the burden in blood and the burden in money, cannot be indifferent towards these uprisings: they must demand an end to them right now.

Their end does not depend on the devastation of fields, the burning of villages and the annihilation of the population. This uprising will cease when the policy which is pursued towards the Albanians today is stopped. The source of these uprisings is not among the Albanians, but among our ruling circles.

Bourgeois and militarist Serbia made a fatal historical error. It thought it would emerge on the Adriatic Sea if it invaded the Albanians instead of drawing them into its embrace. We have made a *premeditated attempt to murder an entire nation*. We were caught red-handed in this criminal act and prevented from carrying it out. Now we must take our punishment. It is terrible: the distrust, indeed, the hatred of a whole people who are there beside us, behind our backs, and moreover, part of it is within our territory, and it is a people whom we must take into consideration on the occasion of any political alliances of ours.

The second crime is the barbaric behaviour towards those elements of the Albanian nation



who are component parts of our state. The emergency regime which rules in new Serbia is intolerable even for our compatriots, so that every day their complaints are heard against assault and terror on the part of the state authorities. Then, what will this regime be for the Albanians ? The truth is that they do not protest in the newspapers, do not write articles against our state, because they can never send such articles to Belgrade and know that no one would publish them there. Instead of this, however, as soon as the winter relaxes and the weather improves, they will unite in thousands and make their collective protests with volleys of rifle fire against the arbitrary and violent Serbian regime which rules there. Their petitions are blood-stained, because the entire regime which rules there is blood-stained.

That first historical mistake of our ruling circles, that attack on the life and independence of the whole of Albania, which only brought us one result - the distrust and hatred of a whole nation, on which we are very dependent - that mistake can be corrected only with difficulty and slowly, if it can be rectified at all. However, at least this second evil ought to be cured: that depends on our government. The regime in the new territories, especially the attitude towards foreign nationalities, hence, also towards the Albanians, must be established on a democratic, cultural and humanitarian platform of tolerance and life and work together.

This is the cure for the insurrection and not the frightful bloody reprisals which are being carried out down there in Kosova while we write these lines.

#### NOTE

\* Taken from *Radnicke Novine*, no. 65, March 17, 1914.



## THE COLONIZATION AND SERBIANIZATION OF KOSOVA (\*)

- by a former Serbian deputy - Kosta Novakovic -

At the beginning of April 1913, I was in Durrës when the Serbian armies boarded ships and sailed for Serbia. Little Albanian boys ran after the columns of Serbian soldiers singing the well-known national song :

*"S'jemi serbe as bullgare  
jemi trima shqipetare..."*

(We are not Serbian, nor Bulgarian,  
we are brave Albanians).

The boys put the word "Serbian" in place of "Greek".

The Serbian peasants, who composed the Serbian army, left for home cheerfully, because the expedition against Albania was at last over, an expedition they did not understand. The insulting words of the Albanian boys, they did not mind at all, because they knew they deserved them; these songs hardly avenged the terrible barbarities they had committed against the Albanian people during the six months of occupation. But behind the Serbian peasants, worn out by war and diseases, stood official Serbia which ground its teeth with indignation, because it was compelled to leave Albania by the ultimatum of the Great Powers and the guns the Austro-Hungarian and Italian warships had aimed at them at the port of Durrës. The fighting operations had long been over. The invasion of Albania by the Serbian army was a Serbian imperialist attempt to capture the ports of Shkodra, Durrës and Shen-Gjin. And although the pan-Serbian imperialists had to get out of Albania, *the occupation of Shkodra and Northern Albania remains one of the main points of their imperialist programme*. The Serbian textbook "What should I know as a soldier?" for the instruction of soldiers, approved and recommended by the War Ministry in decree I.P. no.1161, August 23, 1922, includes the following phrase:

*"All our provinces ... Shkodra and a piece of Northern Albania ... have still not been united to our Kingdom..."*

Peasant Serbia no longer exists. It dwindled away gradually in the course of several decades and in 1912 it disappeared completely. In place of it appeared an imperialist Serbia, with the pan-Serbian imperialists, the pan-Serbian dynasty, and pan-Serbian militarism. This new, crude, brutal and cruel imperialism dreams of reviving Kral Dusan's empire and is striving to catch up in the course of 10 years with the imperialist powers that have existed for centuries. The Serbian peasant has been a blind tool of pan-Serbian imperialism, a cannon-fodder, an animal without a tail, as the Serbian officers called him, who was driven by the whips of officers to hurl himself into the fire and to burn and devastate the places he captured.

The Serbian imperialist government left nothing undone against Albanians during its occupation. It issued orders for scaffolds to be erected in a dozen parts. *It massacred, killed and plundered the impoverished Albanian population. And it persecuted only the poor. Its soldiers guarded the wealthy, the beys and aghas and their estates, so the peasants would not arise and divide among themselves the lands of the beys and aghas.*

The first victims of Serbian imperialism were Macedonia and Kosova. Nevertheless, although obliged by stronger imperialists to give up the coast of Albania, the pan-Serbian imperialists retained the most fertile territory - Kosovo. We call Kosovo all the region inhabited by Albanians: the Plain of Kosova, Metohija and the southern part of the former Sandjak up to Novi Pazar. *More than 500 000 Albanians became slaves of the new invaders. Besides these,*



*there are 150 000 -200 000 Albanians in Macedonia; that is to say, there are 650 000 - 700 000 Albanians in Yugoslavia.*

The enslaved Kosova is an example of a most savage oppression of a nation during the Balkan War and the First World War. The savage, terroristic and inquisitorial measures applied in Kosovo have not been seen even in Eastern Ukraine or in White Russia under Poland, or in Bessarabia or Dobrush under Romania... In this respect, only Macedonia can compare to Kosova.

When they invaded Kosova, the Serbian imperialists proclaimed that they were going to regain the historical rights they had in 1389 (before the Battle of Kosova). Basing themselves on these "historical rights", Italy or France, Greece or Turkey, could rise today to demand half of Europe, because they had held those parts at one time. Indeed, France could demand a piece of Russia, because once in 1812 Napoleon went as far as Moscow.

However, the "historical rights" of Serbia over Kosova are even more astonishing. When the Turkish army in the Middle Ages reached the borders of Austria, the Serbian patriarch Carnojevic and the Serbian landowners went to fight for Austria and to defend the Tuna (Donau) and Sava Rivers. The patriarch and the landowners took with them from Kosova 170 000 Serbian households, mostly unmarried youth and serfs, and settled them in Banat and Backa, which Austria gave them. The land of Kosova remained abandoned and was gradually taken up by the Albanians who lived nearby; together with the few remaining Serbs, Albanians worked it and made it fertile again. (\*) Now, hundreds of years later, the pan-Serbian imperialists claim they have "historical rights" in Backa and Banat where the Serbs of Kosova were settled, as well as in the Kosovo they gave up at that time. This they call historical justice !

On the basis of such "historical rights" the pan-Serbian imperialists are demanding to take "pan-Serbian Kosovo" without Serbs. Kosova is a purely Albanian territory; it has only 10-15 per cent Serbs, settled there since old times.

*The Serbian imperialists employed the tactics and methods of mediaeval warriors or colonial invaders: the annihilation of the population under the pretext of military operations, the disarming of people, and the suppression of the armed resistance.*

Thus, in the years 1912-1913, 120 000 Albanians - men, women, boys, old folk and children, were wiped out; hundreds of villages, more in Kosova and less in Macedonia, were bombarded and most of them completely destroyed.

It should be pointed out that the representative of the Tsarist Russian imperialist policy, Hartwig, the minister of Russia to Belgrade, has blessed Belgrade policy of annihilation. The Orthodox Russia Tsar urged his Orthodox Serbian brother, King Peter and his son Alexander, to kill a whole people and to spread the Orthodox faith in the Balkans. At least 50 000 Albanians were forced to become refugees and flee to Turkey and Albania to save their lives.

This annihilation thinned out the Albanian nation in Kosova a little, but in no way changed the Albanian character there. The objective of these massacres of Albanians in Kosova was to replace them with Serbs and to colonize and Serbianize it. However, until the end of 1912, when there was resistance on the part of the Albanians, the colonization progressed rather slowly. A few Serbs settled only in the region of Kosova at the start.

Here we shall give some official statistics of the Serbian Government, which demonstrate the Albanian character of Kosova. In the *kaza* of Prizren, in 1921, there were 17 per cent Serbs; this proportion was the same also in the *kazas* of Prishtina, Mitrovica, Gjilan, Peja and Gjakova. In some other *kazas* there were even fewer Serbs. In 1921, the whole of Kosova had at the most 17 per cent Serbs.

The Albanians' national resistance developed in two ways: the legal way, by means of the Moslem organization *Xhemijet*, and the revolutionary way, through the armed struggle waged by Albanian national *çeta* fighters called *kaçaks* (outlaws). We shall speak about the *Xhemijet* later. The Serbian Government tried to label the Albanian *kaçaks* as bandits and outlawed them



giving any government agent and any Serbian fascist the right to kill them. In reality, the *kaçaks* are no robbers at all, but patriotic Albanian rebels. They have given up everything, their homes and belongings and taken to the mountains; they have formed *çetas* of freedom fighters and are fighting against the injustices and barbarous acts of the Serbian army and police. The freedom fighters believe that, in this way, they can drive the Serbian regime away from Kosova.

These national fighters have waged a stern war, a war which has to be admired, against much larger forces of the Serbian gendarmerie and army. The names of Bajram Curri, Azem Bejta and hundreds of other brave fighters, who have fallen martyrs in this war, are engraved on the hearts of the Albanians of Kosova.

Since 1920, more than 10 000 freedom fighters moved to the mountains of Kosova. There were 2 000 in Lab alone. In 1920, at the time of the uprising at Lab, the Serbian army, under the command of colonel Rodovan Rodovic, bombarded the large Albanian village of Prapacica and left not a single house standing.

As in Lab, Albanian national movements arose in many other parts of Kosova, and large Serbian forces put them down in 1919 and 1924. Here we mention the uprisings in Plava, Gucia and Rugova in 1919, Prishtina in 1921, Drenica in 1923, Mitrovitca in 1924, and Drenica again in 1924. In suppressing these rebellions, the Serbian army killed 2 600 Albanians.

Thus the national resistance was restricted to the actions of *çetas* of freedom fighters. According to an official Serbian Government report, in 1924, 1 200 patriots had organized themselves in *çetas*. In 1927, the Serbian police drew up a balance: 310 Albanian insurgents killed, 175 captured, and 626 surrendered.

In 1927, the freedom-fighters ceased their operation, but their spirit lives in every village and will not die out until Kosova is free. The pan-Serbian regime is well aware of this. Therefore, it has decided to denationalize Kosova completely, by savagely suppressing the resistance of the Albanians and especially by seizing their land and colonizing it with Serbs. We shall speak about this in a coming number of *Liria Kombetare*.

#### NOTE

\* Taken from the newspaper *Liria Kombetare* (National Freedom), July 13, 1931, Geneva.



## THE MOSLEMS IN SOUTHERN YUGOSLAVIA... (\*)

In our last issue we drew the attention of the Belgrade Government to the sad situation of the Moslems in Southern Yugoslavia, who have become the target of all sorts of mistreatment by the local administration. Unfortunately, our call has met with no response up to this time, and this mistreatment has been stepped up. In the provinces of Kosova, Metohija and Macedonia, the arbitrary expropriation of the Moslem population to the advantage of the Serbs is going on methodically without the least restraint, along with an increase of taxation. The Moslem districts worst affected by this tyrannical regime are those of Podrimje, Mali i Sharrit, Podgorje, Janjeva, Peja, Istok and Llap, whose population is overwhelming by Albanian Moslem. The Serbs want to get rid of these Albanians who might worry them in the future, and, instead of trying to win their hearts through justice and a good administration, they make their stay unbearable in their own country and force them to emigrate. On this point, the Serbs are in agreement with the Turks.

One is reminded of people in high places in Turkey having expressed, some years ago, the hope that their country would treble, if not more, its present population. For the realization of this plan, they counted on the emigration of the Moslems of the Balkans and their settlement in Anatolia. However, they will not abandon their homes, in which they have lived for many centuries, if they are not molested and maltreated. So, the Serbs follow the strange policy towards the Albanians living in Southern Yugoslavia with a double aim. One is to empty of Albanians the regions contiguous to the Albanian State proper, and the other is to force these populations to emigrate to Turkey to increase the number of Turks. Even without this Turco-Serbian agreement, the Belgrade Government had envisaged long ago to settle a Serbian population along the borders of Albania to a depth of 30 kilometres. The poor Albanians complain to Belgrade, but their complaints go unheard. There is no deaf person worse than the one who does not want to listen. Despite their title-deeds and incontestable evidence of their ownership, nobody listens to the Albanian landowners. The Yugoslav Government applies two laws, one dealing with the distribution of the land and the other with the settlement of immigrants. These two are two aspects of one and the same law which is intended to evict the Albanian nation from this region. The land already taken from the Albanian Moslems - this law affects only the Moslem population - is immense. We have been informed of a vast number of arbitrary decrees by which the expropriation of Moslem landowners has taken place, and they indicate how many hectares they have been dispossessed of. The present Stojadinovic cabinet is sanctioning these spoliations feverishly. One might object that this cabinet includes two Moslem ministers, one of whom, Mr. Spaho, is one of the pillars of the present Government. How does it come about, then, that such a destructive policy towards the Moslems of Southern Yugoslavia is being carried out so systematically? According to our information, Mr. Stojadinovic has given Mr. Spaho a free hand as far as the Moslems of the northern regions of Yugoslavia, the Bosnians, are concerned, provided he does not oppose the anti-Moslem agrarian policy in Southern Yugoslavia, given that this country has set itself the aim of gradually wiping out the Moslem element in its southern regions. That is at least what we have learned about this. Is it true? If it is not true, it is no less true that the Moslems of the southern regions of Yugoslavia are being dispossessed of their land and treated as if they had no equal rights with the other peoples. So much so that 12 000 Moslems of the southern regions have to be expatriated this year. The Ministry of Agriculture has recently issued orders to the immans of the Moslems to draw up the statistics of the would be emigrants.

All these measures would be understandable if the emigration in question were voluntary. Nobody could have objected. But to molest a population by different means of coercion, to force it out of its country is neither equitable nor humane. Other methods have also been resorted to



step up the exodus: under the pretext that the Moslems possess illegal weapons, the authorities have begun maltreating and beating them, as a result of which deaths have also been recorded. This savage treatment has started since the Bajram festivity this year, and has become widespread in the province of Kosova, Prizren, Gjakova, Peja, Prishtina and Mitrovica, that is to say, in the regions inhabited by Albanian Moslems.

We think that Yugoslavia does itself harm by resorting to these barbarous methods in the hope of driving these populations out of their territories. True, morality in politics, especially in these recent years, has fallen too low for its principles to be invoked. Here, however, the question is not only one of ethics. The Yugoslav state, a mosaic of different populations, will never be able to disavow the policies it has taken towards all kinds of minorities living on its territory. Under its laws it had pledged to safeguard the ethnic, religious, economic and social rights of all these populations, and no exception has been made for the Albanians. The Albanian people, in general, and the Moslems, in particular, as well as other minorities, see these misdeeds with great bitterness. The reputation for tolerance Yugoslavia enjoyed in the past, even if it was of no little advantage to it, could be replaced by a reputation for tyranny, which is the more regrettable as the Serbian people was up to now considered an honest and good people.

We think that the world atmosphere has become morally infected, especially in the countries which think of themselves as the more civilized ... So, it is but natural that the infection has spread to less important countries.

#### NOTES

\* Abridged from the monthly *La Nation Arabe*, nos. 18-19, Geneva, May, June, July, August 1938.



## DOCUMENTS

### REPORT PRESENTED TO THE CARNEGIE DOTATION (\*) BY THE MEMBERS OF THE INQUIRY COMMISSION IN 1914 (\*\*)

#### EXTERMINATION, EMIGRATION, ASSIMILATION

As regards Albania, the members of the above-mentioned Commission say: "The Albanian population suffered much more in the hands of the Serbs than what the Turkish population suffered in the hands of the Bulgarians...

As for the Serbs, we have an authentic testimony, a letter of a Serbian soldier published by the Serbian socialist newspaper *Radnicke Novine* October 9, 1922...

"On the 20th of September, last year, new calendar, the Serbian army rounded up all the livestock of Malesia of Dibra. The herdsmen were forced to defend themselves and fight back, but they were all killed. Among them the Serbs have killed two chieftains of the clan of Luma, Mehmed-Edem and Xhafer-Elezi, and went on pillaging and burning all the villages lying on their road: Peshkopia, Pleca and Doshisht in Lower Dibra; Allajbeg, Maqellara, Para, Obok, Killobogisht and Sollokiq in Upper Dibra. In all villages, the Serbs have committed frightful massacres and violence against women, children and the old. In the very town of Dibra, the authorities issued an order for the bazaar to remain closed on Sunday and prohibited the inhabitants from coming out of their houses. They ordered the arrest of 48 notables. When the Serbs saw that the inhabitants of the ransacked villages mentioned above had come to claim their livestock and had encircled the town, they took the imprisoned notables and killed them in a most hideous manner. Since then, terror and despair reign among the Albanians of Dibra and its environs, and they have revolted. They have attacked the Serbs with firearms, spades, stones and sticks, and they have killed some and driven the rest out of the town. Virtually all those killed were Serbian functionaries and the surviving soldiers fled across the Radika River ...

"The villages of Leçan, Lisiçan, Dibrica, Halica, Desova, Gradeshnica, Collopek of a mixed Albanian and Bulgarian population, have been looted and put to the torch. Numerous Moslem families, with all their women and children, have been mercilessly massacred. After entering the village of Porçasi, the regular Serbian army took all the men out and asked the women to pay ransom if they wanted their husbands to be released. Nevertheless, after the ransom money was paid, these unfortunate men were shut into a mosque, which was blown up with four bombs. In the village of Sulp, 73 Albanians met with a horrible death and 47 others in the village of Collopek were basely killed. After the return of the Serbian army from the Albanian border, wasn't Prefect of Krusheva openly urging that all the villages lying between Krusheva and Ohri be burned?"

The Albanian petitioners, who on 21st September addressed themselves to the Great Powers in the name of the populations of Gjakova, Peja, Gucia and Plava of the former Vilayet of Kosova, were not exaggerating anything when they observed, in connection with this new theatre of revolt, that "the regular Serbian and Montenegrin troops, from the first day after invading the Albanian territory, have seized everything and executed everyone, either in order to wipe out any trace of the nationality of the inhabitants, or to brutally suppress the 'Shkriptare' (Albanian) race."

"Burning of houses and entire villages, mass extermination of the unarmed and innocent population, unheard of violence, pillage and brutality of all description, these are the means to



which the Serbian and Montenegrin troops have resorted and are still resorting with the aim of entirely changing the ethnic physiognomy of the regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians."

Thus, we come to the second characteristic feature of the Balkan Wars, and this feature, apart from other things, is the necessary outcome of the first one. Since the population of the places which were going to be occupied knew by instinct, as well as by tradition and experience, that it had to guard against the enemy armies and the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, it fled without waiting for their arrival. Thus, as a rule, the enemy army found on its way only half-deserted, if not entirely abandoned, villages. To carry out orders for extermination, it simply put them to the torch. Warned by the flames of the fires, the population fled in all haste. A real migration of the people followed, because, both in Macedonia and in Thrace, there is not a single place which, at some moment or other, did not find itself in the path of an army. This second fact struck the Commission everywhere it went. Endless lines of ox-carts, followed by emigrant families, plodded along the railways, and we found groups of refugees camped in the neighbourhood of the big towns...

The Albanians flee from the Serbs, and if emigration among the Serbs and the Bulgarians is not of a general character, this is so because these two nations have not, we may say, clashed on their own territories and because each claims that Macedonia, which both of them are coveting, is a place inhabited by their own congeners. That is why here we have to do with a mitigated form of the self-same principle, that of war among nationalities. It is no longer a question of extermination or emigration which the Serbs are employing against the Albanians; it is an indirect means, which should lead to the same goal of conversion and assimilation..

#### NOTES

\* Named after its founder, A. Carnegie (1838-1919).

\*\* Excerpts from the report of the Inquiry Commission of 1914 in the book "Enquete dans les Balkans", Paris, 1914.



## THE PROGRAM OF THE ALBANIAN GENERAL UPRISING OF SPRING 1919 IN THE DUKAGJIN PLATEAU (\*)

I. No insurgent must harm the local Slavs apart from those who put up armed resistance against the Albanian cause.

II. No insurgent must burn houses or damage churches.

III. Taking booty is forbidden to insurgents.

IV. No insurgent must mutilate the dead bodies of their enemies or strip enemies who are dead, wounded or taken prisoner.

V. The most vigorous action must be taken against the army, the gendarmerie and the irregular forces of the enemy who resist arms in hand; even if the enemy commits atrocities against unarmed Albanians, clauses I, II, III and IV must be adhered to strictly and completely.

VI. A traitor who opposes the struggle alongside the enemy or individually is against the Albanian cause, is to be killed out of hand, whoever he might be. But an unarmed traitor must be tried by a court of the insurrection and sentenced on the basis of evidences and not mere hearsay.

VII. The local Slavs and the market-place must be guarded by trustworthy people, the loyal insurgents must pursue the enemy continuously and unhesitatingly through cities and villages.

VIII. Neither the blood of our people nor that of the enemy people should be shed needlessly. But wherever it is necessary, an insurgent must not spare his own blood or that of his kin.

IX. The Europeans and the consuls and their belongings must be protected by loyal and obedient people.

X. The Albanian dead must not be buried until the foreign commission comes. The atrocities committed by the enemy have to be recorded and reported to Europe and America.

### NOTES

\* *Central State Archives*, Fund 846, file 2, p.1. The uprising broke out in the spring of 1919. It was directed against the anti-Albanian policy of repression and annihilation pursued by the rulers in Belgrade against Kosova and other territories. The program of the uprising was drafted by the Committee for "the National Defence of Kosova".



**MEMORANDUM OF THE UNITED COMMITTEES OF UNLIBERATED  
ALBANIA SIGNED BY HASAN PRISHTINA, BAJRAM CURRI AND OTHERS,  
TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS  
ON THE SERBIAN MASSACRES AGAINST ALBANIANS (\*)**

*Geneva, September 26, 1924*

Mr. Chairman,

Since the first days of the restoration of the Serbian rule in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro (15-30 October 1918), our committees have addressed themselves to the Peace Conference, the Ambassadors' Conference, the League of Nations and the public opinion of the civilized world to protest against this regime and against the fact that the Serbo-Croato-Slovene state not only had no desire to respect the rights of minorities but has gone so far as to deny the Albanians' right to exist.

The attached documents present a picture of the Serb's attitude towards the Albanians in the above-mentioned provinces :

**1. The organization of armed bands**

Under the name of national organizations, the Serbo-Croato-Slovene state has organized armed bands which are terrorizing the Albanian regions and massacring the peasants after plundering and burning their homes.

**2. The organization of periodic massacres**

Under the pretext of suppressing outlaws (deserters), the regular Serbian military forces have destroyed numerous villages in the regions of Prishtina, Vuçiterna, Mitrovitca and Ipek, massacring thousands of peasants, not sparing women, children or old people.

**3. The colonization of destroyed villages and abandoned homes**

Each attack for the destruction of the Albanians is followed by an operation to settle Russian, Montenegrin and Serbian colonists. For their part, these colonists systematically terrorize the neighbouring villages, compelling the inhabitants to abandon their homes and lands which are immediately confiscated and colonized. Those who are called outlaws are precisely some of the victims of this tragic manoeuvre, who roam around their homes.

**4. Legalized plunder**

Kosova, an entirely agricultural region..., is now languishing under a terrible misery: the land has been taken from the peasants and citizens of Albanian nationality, who in general are farmers, on the pretext of the implementation of the agrarian law.

**5. The mass emigration of Albanians of Kosova**

This regime of fire, steel and plunder constitutes the main factor for the mass emigration of the Albanians to Turkey, which is happening in terrible conditions, costing hundreds of families their lives and condemning the remainder to untold suffering.

**6. The constitutional freedoms**

Regarding the Albanians of Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro, the Serbian Constitution has no value, apart from that of the letters printed in gold, but to more readily



deceive the public opinion of the civilized world. For the Albanians it is the same as the Young Turks' Constitution of 1908-1918 was for the Armenians.

### 7. "Serbian justice"

To have a clear idea of what "Serbian justice" is, it is sufficient to know that nobody has been brought before the court for thousands and thousands of crimes committed in broad daylight; it is the only country in the world where murders are committed in the presence of judges who say nothing.

All these things we presented above are contrary to the norms defined in the Articles 1 to 8 of the First Chapter of the Treaty on the Rights of National Minorities, which was signed at Saint-Germain on September 10, 1919, by the main allied powers and the Serbo-Croato-Slovene state.

Hoping that the League of Nations will have the kindness to intervene with the Belgrade Government to ensure the implementation of the above-mentioned treaty, we beg you to accept our feelings of the greatest respect.

Signed : Bajram Curri, Hasan Prishtina ...

Representatives of the United Committees of unliberated Albania.

### NOTES

\* *Central State Archives, Fund 251, F. 208, pp. 1-4, (French in the original).*



## THE EXPULSION OF ARNAUTS (\*)

The problem of the Albanians in our national and state life did not arise yesterday. It played a major role in our life in the Middle Ages, but its importance became decisive by the end of the 17th century, when the masses of the Serbian people were displaced northwards from their former ancestral territories of Raska and were supplanted by the Albanian highlanders. Gradually the latter came down from their mountains to the fertile plains of Metohija and Kosova. Penetrating to the north, they spread in the direction of Southern and Western Morava, and, crossing the Sharr Mountain, descended towards Polog and, thence, in the direction of the Vardar. In this way, by the 19th century, the Albanian triangle was formed, a wedge which based on its Debar-Rogozna axis in its ethnic rear, penetrated as far into our territories as Nis and separated our ancient territories of Raska from Macedonia and the Vardar Valley.

This wedge, inhabited by the anarchist Albanian elements, hampered any strong cultural, educational and economic connection between our northern and southern territories in the 19th century. This was the main reason why Serbia was unable to exercise its cultural and political influence on the Vardar Valley that was anticipated, because of the favourable geographical and road links and the historical traditions in these regions; it was after 1878 that Serbia managed to establish and maintain continuous links with Macedonia through Vranja and the Black Mountain of Shkup... Serbia began to cut pieces off this Albanian wedge as early as the first uprising, by expelling the northernmost Albanian inhabitants from Jagorina.

Understanding and applying the broad concepts of Jovan Ristic, Serbia cut another part off this wedge after the annexation of Toplica and Kosanica. At that time, the regions between Jastrepce and Southern Morava were radically cleared of the Albanians.

From 1918 onwards, it was the task of our present state to destroy the remainder of the Albanian triangle. It did not do this ... The methods of our colonization policy in the south to date have not yielded the results which we ought to have achieved and which now impose themselves on us as a major state necessity...

### The problems of the colonization of the southern regions

... In examining the problem of the colonization of the southern regions, the issue is about the area to the north and south of the Sharr Mountain. This is not accidental. This block of Albanians around the Sharr Mountains has great national, state and strategic importance to our state ... Since the founding of the first Serbian state in the ninth century, Serbia has always wanted to expand continuously, as well as the ancient territories of Raska in all directions, including the south. However, this continuity has been interrupted by the Albanians and, until the ancient uninterrupted connection of Serbia and Montenegro with Macedonia along the whole of its extent from the Drin River to Southern Morava is re-established, we will not be secure in our possession of this territory. From the ethnic stand-point, the Macedonians will fully unite with us only when they enjoy true ethnic support from the Serbian motherland, which they have lacked to this day. This they will achieve only with the destruction of the Albanian block.

From the military-strategic stand-point, the Albanian block occupies one of the most important positions in our country - the starting-point from which the Balkan rivers flow to the Adriatic, the Black Sea and the Aegean. The holding of this strategic position, to a large degree, determines the fate of the Central Balkans, especially that of the important Balkan communication line from Morava to Vardar... It is an imperative duty for all of us that we



should not allow these positions of such strategic importance to be in the hands of hostile and alien elements.

Besides this block of 18 districts, the Albanians and other national minorities in other parts of the southern regions are dispersed and, therefore, not so dangerous to our national and state life. To Slavonize the regions around the Sharr Mountains means to bury and irredentism for ever, to ensure our power in these territories for ever... This problem will be solved only when our colonies, advancing from the north, through Kosova and Metohija, towards the Sharr Mountains and Pollog, meet one another and no vacant room is left between them and the Macedonian settlements.

With the removal of the Albanians, the last link between our Moslems in Bosnia and Novi Pazar and the rest of the Moslem world is cut. They are becoming religious minorities, the only Moslem minority in the Balkans, and this fact will accelerate their national assimilation.

### **Summing-up :**

The Albanians cannot be repulsed by means of gradual colonization alone; they are the only people who, during the last millennium, managed not only to resist the hard core of our state - Raska and Zeta, but also to harm us, by pushing our ethnic borders northwards and eastwards... The only way and the only means to cope with them is the brute force of an organized state, which has always been superior to them. If, since 1912, we have had no success in the struggle against them, we are to blame for it, as we have not used this power as we should have done. It is not possible to speak of any national assimilation of the Albanians in our favour. On the contrary, because they base themselves on Albania, their national awareness is awakened, and if we do not settle accounts with them at the proper time, within 20-30 years, we shall have to cope with a terrible irredentism, the signs of which are already apparent and which will inevitably put all our southern territories in jeopardy.

### **The international problem of colonization**

If we proceed from the assumption that the gradual displacement of the Albanians through our colonization has been ineffective, then we are left with only one course - that of their mass resettlement. In this case we must consider two states - Albania and Turkey.

With its large, yet uninhabited and uncultivated, territories in Asia Minor and Kurdistan, modern Turkey has almost boundless possibilities for internal colonization... The greatest possibilities are that the bulk of our displaced Albanians might be sent there.

First, we stress that we should not limit ourselves to diplomatic steps with the Ankara Government only, but should employ all means to convince Tirana to accept some of our displaced people... In the talks about this question, the Albanian Government should be informed that we shall stop at nothing to achieve the final solution to this question, while at the same time, we should tell them about the possibility of the subsidies for colonization, over which no control will be exercised; eventually, through secret channels, the notables in Tirana may be persuaded to raise no opposition to this whole business.

Turkey has agreed to accept about 200 000 of our displaced people initially, on condition that they are Albanians, something which is most advantageous to us. We must comply with this desire of Turkey readily and sign a convention about the resettlement of the Albanian population as soon as possible. In connection with the resettlement of the Albanian population, we must study the conventions which Turkey has signed recently on these questions with Greece, Romania and Bulgaria, paying attention to two things: that Turkey should accept the largest possible contingent, while from the financial aspect, it should be given the maximum



assistance, especially in organizing their transportation as quickly as possible. Undoubtedly this problem will give rise to some international concern, which is inevitable in such cases. Over the last hundred years, whenever such actions have taken place in the Balkans, there has always been some great power which has protested because such an action did not conform to its interests... World opinion will be upset a little. Nevertheless, the world today has grown used to things much worse than this and is so preoccupied with day-to-day problems that this aspect should not be a cause for concern... the shifting of a few hundred thousand Albanians will not lead to the outbreak of a world war. However, the competent organs should know what is necessary and persist in achieving this, regardless of the possible international obstacles ... The greatest danger lies in the possibility that our great allies, France and Britain, might interfere in this affair. In this case they must be given the cool and resolute answer that the security of the Morava-Vardar line is in their interests, a thing which was confirmed during the last great war; and it will be made more secure, both for them and for us, only when we completely dominate these regions around the Sharr Mountain and Kosova.

### **The mode of removal**

As we have already stressed, the mass removal of the Albanians from their triangle is the only effective course for us. To bring about the relocation of a whole population, the first prerequisite is the creation of a suitable atmosphere. It can be created in many ways...

First of all, we must win over their clergy and men of influence, through money or threats, to support the relocation of the Albanians. Agitators to advocate this removal must be found as quickly as possible... They must describe the beauties in the new territories in Turkey, the easy and pleasant life there, kindle religious fanaticism and awaken pride in the Turkish state among the masses. Our press can be of colossal help by describing the gentle removal of Turks from Dobrudja and how well they have settled down in the new regions. These descriptions would create the necessary predisposition to shift among the mass of Albanians here.

Another means would be coercion by the state apparatus. The law must be enforced to the letter so as to make staying intolerable for the Albanians: fines, imprisonments, ruthless application of all police dispositions..., putting as many people as possible to compulsory labour and any other measure that an experienced police force can contrive; economic measures: refusal to recognize the old land deeds, work with the land register in these regions should immediately include the ruthless collection of taxes and the compulsory payment of all private and public debts, requisition of all state and communal pastures, cancellation of concessions, withdrawal of permits to exercise a profession, dismissal from state, private, and communal offices, etc. This will hasten the process of their removal; health measures: application through violence of all the dispositions even in the homes, pulling down of encircling walls and high hedges around the houses, rigorous application of veterinary measures, which will result in impeding the sale of livestock on the market, etc., also should be applied in an effective and practical way. When it comes to religion, the Albanians are very touchy, therefore, they must be harassed on this score, too. This can be achieved through ill-treatment of their clergy, the destruction of their cemeteries... We should distribute weapons to our colonists, as need be. The old forms of *cetnik* action should be organized and secretly assisted. In particular, a tide of Montenegrins should be launched from the mountain pastures, in order to create large-scale conflicts with the Albanians in Metohija. These conflicts should be prepared by means of our trusted people. They should be encouraged, so as to create the impression as if the Albanians have revolted, while the whole affair should be presented as a deplorable conflict between clans and, if need be, ascribed to economic reasons. Finally, local riots can be incited. These will be bloodily suppressed with the most effective means, but by colonists from the Montenegrin



clans and the *cetniks* rather than by means of the army.

There remains one more means, which Serbia employed with great practical effect after 1878, that is, secretly burning down Albanian villages and city quarters.

### **The organization of the removal**

The regions that must be cleared ... are: Upper Dibra, Lower Polog, Upper Polog, Sharr Mountains, Drenica, Peja, Istok, Vuçitern, Stavica, Llap, Graçanica, Nerodimje, Gjakova, Podgor, Gora, Podrimja, Gjilan and Kaçanik. Among these regions, which together comprise the Albanian wedge, the most important for us at present are: Peja, Gjakova, Podrimja, Gora, (Dragas), Sharr, Podgor, Istok and Drenica - north of the Sharr Mountains... These are border regions which must be cleared of Albanians at any cost. The internal regions such as Kaçanik, Gjilan, Nerodimje, Graçanica, Llap, Vuçitern, etc., must be weakened if possible, especially those of Kaçanik and Llap, while the others should be gradually and systematically colonized over the period of a decade.

The above-mentioned means should be used, in the first place, in the border regions, if we wish to clear them of Albanians.

During the first deportations the following must be kept in mind: in the first place, deportation should begin in the villages and then in towns. Being more compact, the villages are more dangerous. Both the poor and the middle and rich strata, which make up the backbone of every nation, should be deported. Lacking economic support..., the poor submit more quickly. This question has great importance, and I emphasize this because one of the main causes for the lack of success of our colonization in the south is that the poor were expelled, while the rich remained, thus we were no further forward, and gained very little land for the settlement of our colonists. During the creation of the atmosphere for the resettlement, everything possible must be done to send off whole villages, or at least, whole families. The situation that part of the family is shifted while others remain behind, must be prevented at all costs. Our state is not going to spend millions to make life easier for the Albanians, but to get rid of them as quickly as possible... We must combine the shifting of individuals and whole villages if we want things made easy for us during the process of deportation.

Once they agree to shift, all-round aid should be given them. Their property should be paid for on the spot, the administrative act of removal completed, travel documents issued without the least formality, and they should be assisted to get to the nearest railway station; trains should be made available for them as far as Salonica, and thence they should be immediately shipped to Asia. It is very important that the journey should be comfortable and cheap. Possibly, the travel by train should be free and they should be assisted with food, because whether or not large masses will shift depends largely on this ... The displaced person must pass from hand to hand without feeling the burden of this movement. Only in this way is it possible to create that flow of displaced Albanians which will empty our south of them.

### **Populating the depopulated regions**

The problem of the establishment of colonists in the depopulated regions is not less important than the removal of the Albanians.

The first question emerges : Who should be settled there ? The most natural thing is to people them with our element from the passive regions, in the first place, Montenegrins, people from Hercegovina, Lican and Krajsnica. The Montenegrins are the most appropriate for several reasons, because Metohija, Drenica and Kosova are the most natural places into which they flow from their impoverished mountains. The increase of population in Montenegro has brought about poverty, which in recent times has given rise to continual socio-political unrest,



unfavourable to our state power and very dangerous to law and order in the future. Giving them maize and pensions is useless. The only solution is to send them to the fertile regions of Metohija, Drenica and Kosova. Then, since they are akin to the Albanians in mentality and temperament, the Montenegrins are the most appropriate as instruments to overcome and expel them. In the first place, they must be used in the Albanian regions north of the Sharr Mountains; however, along with them, some people from Lican, Krajsnica, Serbia, Cacak, Uzice, and Toplica should be used as colonists ...

Suitable conditions should be created for the Southern Serb emigrants living in the regions south of the Sharr Mountain so that they can take possession of the fertile lands ... The rural Southern Serbs, in general, have a right to expect more care and attention than we are giving them today. The colonization of Polog (Upper and Lower) and Dibra with these paupers, as well as allocating pastures to them instead of Albanians, will make them feel that this is their state, and they will know to defend its borders with their blood.

Close to them, the colonization south of the Sharr Mountains and the Black Mountain of Shkup can be done with Serbs, people from Vranja, Leskovac, Pirot, and Vlastenica, especially those from passive mountain villages...

(The colonists - ed.) must be linked with the land by the force of law. This is because they must begin to love their new region and home, and if they do not succeed in this, at least their children should. For this reason, they should be prevented by law from gaining full ownership of the land for not less than 30 years, even though they are given title to the possession of the land immediately...

After 1878, when the Albanians were expelled from these regions (Toplica and Kosanica - ed.),... without hesitation, Serbia sought and got its first foreign loan in order to pay Turkey for the lands taken. It did not set up any ministry of the agrarian reform or costly apparatus for the problem of colonization, but everything was done in a simple and practical manner. The police organs distributed the land to all those who wanted to till it. People came from Montenegro, Senica, Vranja, Kosova, etc., and 30 years after 1878, Toplica and Kosanica, once Albanian regions of ill-repute, gave Serbia the finest regiment in the wars of 1912-1918, the Iron Second Regiment. In those wars, Toplica and Kosanica paid and repaid, with the blood of their sons, those tens of millions of dinars which Serbia had once spent for these settlers.

Only by following this example and knowing what is required, sparing neither money nor blood, can our state create a new Toplica in Kosova and Metohija.

Hence, if we want the colonists to remain where they are, they must be assured of acquiring all the means of livelihood within a few years. We must ruthlessly prohibit any speculation in the houses and properties of displaced Albanians. The state must reserve for itself the unlimited right to dispose of the fixed and movable assets of the people transferred and must settle its own colonists there immediately after the departure of the Albanians. This must be done, because it has rarely happened that a whole village departs at once. The first to be settled in these villages should be the Montenegrins, an arrogant, hot-tempered and merciless people, who will drive the remaining Albanians away with their behaviour, and then colonists from other regions can be brought in.

This paper deals with the problem of the colonization of Southern Serbia only. However, the problem of Vojvodina, especially the Hungarian triangle in Backa, Senta Kula, Backa - Topola, is not less important to us. To destroy this triangle in Vojvodina is tantamount to destroying the Albanian block around the Sharr Mountains...

### **The colonization apparatus**

Of special importance for the solution of the question under discussion is the existence of an apparatus to direct the whole business...



In the future, the colonization should be entrusted to the General Staff. Why? Simply for reason of defence. Our army is interested in settling our own elements along the borders, especially in the most delicate sectors. To this end, it will do its utmost to secure the borders with the firmest possible colonization. The General Staff, as the prime institution for the defence of our national interests, can contribute a great deal to our whole policy of colonization...

The General Staff would guide all the work through a State Council for colonization. This Council would be quite independent, but under the direct control of the Chief of the General Staff, and would have the organs of our colonization under its control. Representatives of several interested ministries, national associations, technical organizations and scientific institutions, should be brought into this council... This requires the close linking of the state power, private initiative and scientific institutions with our colonization policy. Private initiative can operate in many directions. For instance, the People's Defence, the Sokols, the Cetnik Associations, etc., could undertake actions against the Albanians, where it is inappropriate for the state to be involved...

The Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences and the University of Belgrade, which are directly involved, ought to take the initiative to organize a scientific study of the problem of colonization in our country. They should set up a Colonization Institute, which would engage in the study of colonization. The state, for its part, should detach organisms from several ministries and all the institutions which have been engaged with this problem so far, and create a special institution, "the Colonization Inspection Office".

The Colonization Inspection Office would be headed by the Inspector General, appointed by decree on the proposal of the Minister of War, the Chief of the General Staff and the Prime Minister. All the work in the Colonization Institute and the Colonization Inspection Office would be carried out on orders from and under the supervision of the State Council, while the Inspector General would be answerable to the Chief of the General Staff.

The Colonization Institute would be divided into the following sections: 1) organization, 2) education and culture, 3) finance, 4) agriculture, 5) construction, 6) hygiene, etc. In agreement with the technical-scientific associations and institutions, as well as with national associations, the sections would study problems of colonization and prepare directives, thus supplying our colonization policy with a solid, scientifically worked-out material from which to make decisions. At the head of this institute would be people from the State Council, made up of representatives of the ministries mentioned, the University, the Academy of Sciences, and people from national and educational-cultural organizations who would be elected or appointed to it. In this case care must be taken not to bring in unqualified people, but men who are competent and dedicated to this great work.

The heads and employees of the Institute should be selected through competition. The Institute should supply the Colonization Inspection Office with scientifically worked-out materials for the implementation of the colonization policy. In cases of differences of opinion between the Colonization Inspection Office and the Institute over some fundamental question, the Chief of the General Staff would have the decisive say.

The Colonization Inspection Office must have its executive organs in the territory, made up of people selected for their enthusiasm and readiness for this work, whether or not they are employed by the state. Therefore, they should possibly be selected through competition and be appointed upon proposal by the Chief of the General Staff, while as to the corrupt or incompetent cadres, they must be dismissed. During its work, the Colonization Inspection Office and its organs must avoid the bureaucratic formalities as much as possible, while keeping in mind only one thing - the removal of the Albanians as quickly as possible and the immediate settlement of our colonists.

The police apparatus will play a very important role in this matter. Therefore, it is necessary to select the most energetic officers... and send them there. Their transfer should be



done with the approval of the Chief of the General Staff, and for such a difficult job they should be paid from secret credits...

A special commissar, who would execute the orders of the State Colonization Inspector, must be appointed for the whole territory of the 18 districts. Heads of districts must be given special wide powers for the work and the respective instructions...

### Financial means

...Every state has its primary and secondary interests. Without doubt it must be the primary duty of the state to ensure the holding of the insecure national regions by colonizing them with its own national elements. All other commitments rank inferior to this task and this commitment. For this problem, the money can and must be found... When the small Serbian Kingdom (in 1880 - ed.), deposited great financial sacrifices, did not hesitate, although it was a new state, to use its first foreign loan for colonization, can it be said that our present-day Yugoslavia is unable to make such a sacrifice? It can and must do it, and it is not true that it lacks the means to do it. First, let us reckon approximately how much it would cost our state to transplant 200 000 Albanians and establish as great a number of our settlers.

The resettlement of 40 000 Albanian families, taking an average family of 5 members and an average of 15 000 dinars per each family, would cost a total of 600 million. The colonization expenditure for the settling of our 40 000 families may reach a total of 200 million. In any case, the whole project will not cost more than 800 million dinars. This is why:

- The transplanted Albanians will leave not only the land but also their houses and implements. Thus, not only will the overwhelming majority of our settlers be established in the houses of the Albanians, but, with a little assistance with livestock and food, they will recover themselves economically and become independent...

- During the setting up of new colonies, military forces should be employed, where required, as was the case with the construction of Sremska Raca and the reconstruction of the villages destroyed by the 1913 earthquake in the south. To this end, the army should be given the right and possibility of enrolling reservists, or extending the term of military service so as to create a kind of obligatory labour service for public projects, just as Stambolisky in Bulgaria created the "Trudova Povinnost" and Hitler created the "Arbeitsdienst" in Germany ...

Altogether, a sum of a few hundred million dinars is not so great an expenditure for the state in comparison with the real benefits it will gain from such a move. By securing our most sensitive points in the south, through the settlement of our own people we save several divisions in case of war ...

For such a national, strategic - military and economic task the state must sacrifice a few hundred million dinars... It can and must find a few hundred million dinars which will put us back in possession of the cradle of our state.

### Conclusions

In view of all that has been said above, it is no accident that in our examination of the question of colonization in the south, we proceed from the view that the only effective method for solving this problem is the mass deportation of the Albanians ... When the state wants to intervene in favour of its own people, in struggle for the land, it can be successful only if it acts brutally. Otherwise, the native, with his roots in his birthplace and acclimatized there, is always stronger than the colonist. In our case, this must be kept especially well in mind, because we have to deal with a rugged, resistant and prolific race, which the late Cvijic described as the most expansive in the Balkans...



Our statistics for the period 1921-1931... show that the fecundity of Albanian women defeated our colonization policy, too. From this we must draw conclusions, and do so quickly, while there is still time to correct matters.

All Europe is in a state of turmoil. We do not know what each day and night may bring. Albanian nationalism is mounting in our territories, too. To leave the situation as it is would mean, in case of any world conflict or social revolution, both of which are possible in the near future, to jeopardize all our territories in the south. The purpose of this paper is to avert such a thing.

March 7, 1937

Dr. VASO CUBRILOVIC  
( signed )

#### NOTES

\* Abridged from the report submitted to the Serbian Club of Culture in Belgrade, on March 7, 1937, by Dr. Vasa Cubrilovic. (Vasa Cubrilovic, *Iselavanije Arnauta*, A VII B, p. 17, K. 2-3, 1-37). Vasa Cubrilovic was born in 1897. In his youth he was a member of Serbian nationalist organisations. After graduating with a doctor's degree from the University of Belgrade, since 1930 he has been assistant, docent and then professor in the Faculty of Philosophy of this University. He was very active in the Serbian Club of Culture in Belgrade. After the Second World War, he held high posts in the state, being minister of the Federative Government. He is member of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and one of the most authoritative members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 1970, he held the post of director of the Institute of Balkanology in Belgrade. For some years now, he has been elected correspondent member of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union. For his activity after the Second World War he has been awarded with several orders.



# A LEAFLET TO THE PROGRESSIVE YOUTH OF METOHIIJA AND KOSOVA AND TO ALL THE PEOPLES OF YUGOSLAVIA (\*)

## To the Albanians and Colonists of Metohija and Kosova

Since 1918, the Albanians in Yugoslavia have been killed, put to the torch; and expelled from their land and their homes. They have been denied the use of their mother tongue at school and required to give up their national traditions. Besides this, in perfidious and barbarous ways, the outside plunderers, the banks and the taxes levied by robbers suck their blood. The lords of Serbia are working night and day to wipe out Albanians, as all the cabinets up to now have done and as the J.R.Z. (Yugoslav Radical Union -ed.), represented by Stojadinovic-Korosec-Spaho is doing today, continuing the terror and the killing of the best sons of our people instead of giving us freedom as they promised. But the Albanians have withstood all these unheard of villainies, injustices, and hardships.

Although they have always been driven with bayonets to assist cabinets which are hostile to them, they continue to resist sternly. In order to defeat the struggle of enslaved Albanians and Montenegrins, the lords of Serbia have settled Montenegrins on the lands they have seized from poor Albanians, while they have not touched the lands of monasteries and holy places. In this way, they have made them enemies of one another, so they can rule them more easily.

However, the struggle and the killings in the commune of Beran showed that the Albanians' struggle has not been defeated and the Albanians and Montenegrins are seeing that their salvation lies in unity against traitors of the people.

The progressive youth of Kosova and Metohija

The progressive youth of all the people of Yugoslavia

## NOTES

\* CSA, Fund 251, year 1937, file 126, pp. 169-170. Appeal of March 1937.



Dr. HAKIF BAJRAMI  
Prishtina - Yugoslavia

## THE YUGOSLAV-TURKISH CONVENTION OF 1938 ON THE DEPORTATION OF ALBANIANS (\*)

...In the fourth decade of the 20th century, the political circumstances in Yugoslavia were changing in favour of the social opposition to the Government. Observing this phenomenon of active resistance among Albanians (because there were no longer wavering elements in their ranks), the royal court openly entered into political arrangements for the deportation of the Albanians ...

With the formation of the government of Milan Stojadinovic, intense consultations commenced in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Yugoslav Kingdom in connection with the deportation of Albanians to Turkey. The truth is that a small committee had been formed secretly (July 1935) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which, besides holding discussions in the *Srpski kulturni klub*, had also to prepare a model project for the deportation of Albanians. During August and September, the model project was ready for discussion within interested ministries. On September 24, 1935, this committee had analysed the project based on the law on citizenship (Article 55) and sent it to the forum founded by the council of ministers. The inter-ministerial conference took place on October 1, 1935 in Belgrade, under the chairmanship of Ilija Milikic, the representative of the Foreign Ministry. Attending the conference as delegates were Vojislav Magovcevic from the Ministry of Agriculture, Dusan Trajkovic, from the General Staff, Dusan Tadic from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (in absentia)...

The conference reached a five-point conclusion, which pointed out that the question of the deportation (eventual assimilation) of Albanians should be settled in two ways: 1. the mass deportation to Turkey should be done on the basis of an inter-state convention; and 2. the remaining part of the population should be dispersed within the country (Yugoslavia), where it was foreseen that it would be assimilated eventually by the dominant Slavs. The conference also took the decision that all state services should be ordered to combat the Albanian propaganda against deportation. The basic conclusion of the conference was that this could be achieved only through pressure...

The Stojadinovic Government issued orders in a secret code to all its ministries to conduct detailed studies on the deportation of Albanians from Yugoslavia. Following the Balkan Agreement, inter-ministerial meetings began to be held in Belgrade in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (March 8, April 13, May 30, June 15 and June 16, 1938). They stressed that the forcible removal of Albanians should be applied only to the peasants in order to free the land from their ownership. All speakers agreed that the number of Albanians to be shifted would be from 200 000 to 2 million. It was decided that Yugoslavia would pay Turkey a sum of 15 000 dinars for every family deported, but it insisted that the number of members of each family should be as large as possible. Indeed, the fact that there were whole Albanian hamlets of families with the same surname was used as an argument to prove that they were allegedly of the same family. In this case, their surname was to serve to "put together one family", even if they were hundreds of kilometres apart and without any blood kinship.

The (Yugoslav-Turkish-ed.) talk on the deportation of Albanians began in Istanbul on June 9, 1938, under the chairmanship of the Turkish delegate, Hasan Saka. Ristic, chief of the Balkan section at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Magovcevic, inspector at the Ministry of Agriculture, took part in the meeting from the Yugoslav side. Also present as observers were



the minister to Turkey, Telemak, the Romanian delegate to Turkey, and the Greek representative in Turkey. (M.R.Rafael). The talks about the deportation of Albanians proceeded behind closed doors. The meeting continued until ... July 13, 1938, and after eight sessions and much discussion, the convention was compiled on July 11, 1938. (1)

## CONVENTION

On regulating the emigration of the Turkish  
population (\*) from the region of Southern Serbia in Yugoslavia

The Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of his Majesty, the King  
of Yugoslavia,

- noting the tendency to emigration manifested by certain elements of the Turkish Moslem population in the region of Southern Serbia... which has decided to leave the territory of the Kingdom, through the legitimate desire to join its natural ethnic trunk,
- have decided to enter the following convention...

### *Article I*

This Convention applies to Yugoslav Moslem subjects of Turkish origin and language and those with a Turkish culture ...

### *Article II*

The regions which are subjected to emigration according to this Convention are the following :

- 1) The region of the Banovina of Vardar:

The the regions of Sharr Mountains (Prizren), Gora (Dragas), Podgora (Suha-Reka), Donji Polog-Pollogu i Ulet (Tetova), Gornji Polog-Pollogu i Siperu (Gostivar), Galica (Rostusa), Dibra (Debar), Struga, Gračanica (Prishtina), Kačanik, Gjilan, Presheva, Prespa (Resnja), Ohrid (Ohri), Kičevo, Krushevo, Poreč (Juzni Brod-Makedonski Brod), Prilep, Marihovo (Manastir-Marihova), Bitolj (Manastir), Kavadare, Negotin Na Vardaru (Negotin on Vardar), Skopje (Shkup), Kumanova, Veles, Ovci Polje, Stip (Shtip), Kocane (Koçane), Radovishta, Strumica, Dojra (Valandova), Djevdjelia (Gjevgjelia), Kriva Palanka, Kratova, Carevo Selo, Males (Berovo).

- 2) The region of Banovina of Zeta includes:

Pec (Peja), Istok (Istog), Mitrovica of Kosova, Gjakovica, Podrimje (Rahovec).

- 3) The region of Banovina of Morava includes:

Llap (Podujevo), Vuçiterna, Drenica (Srbica).

The Yugoslav Government will decide from which region the emigration will commence.

### *Article III*

The number of families for which the Turkish Government assumes the obligation to accept from the regions mentioned in Article II according to the conditions of this Convention, will be 40 000.

A family implies all persons of one blood and their children who, at the moment of the



signing of this Convention, are living in an undivided common rural estate and under a common roof.

#### *Article IV*

The repatriation of these 40 000 families will be carried out in six years, in the following proportions :

- 1) In 1939 : 4 000 families
- 2) In 1940 : 6 000 "
- 3) In 1941 : 7 000 "
- 4) In 1942 : 7 000 "
- 5) In 1943 : 8 000 "
- 6) In 1944 : 8 000 "

If, because of eventual obstacles or difficulties, this number of families cannot be achieved in the years foreseen, the two contracting parties will reach agreement, through the intermediary of their respective legations, on the number of emigrants which will be evacuated by one party and accepted by the other, three months before the beginning of the period of emigration. It is understood, however, that these eventual alterations to the annual number of emigrants cannot be extended more than one year beyond the six years fixed for emigration.

The periods of annual emigration will extend from the beginning of May to October 15, except for the contingent of emigrants of the first year which will commence to be evacuated at the beginning of July 1939.

#### *Article VI*

On the basis of this Convention, all the fixed rural assets which belong to the future emigrants will go by right to the possession of the Yugoslav State from the moment when the Yugoslav Government presents the annual list of emigrants to the representatives of Turkey in Yugoslavia.

In regard to the urban fixed assets, they will remain at the free disposal of their owners...

#### *Article VII*

Under the agreement the Yugoslav Government will pay the Turkish Government 500 Turkish lira per family, totalling a sum of 20 million Turkish lira for the 40 000 families, without taking into consideration the number of members of each family.

As against this total payment, all the fixed rural assets belonging to deportees, in conformity with Article VI, pass into possession of the Yugoslav Government.

In regard to the fixed and liquid rural assets which belong to the Moslem Community or to Evkaf (holy place), it is understood that this Convention does not alter the provisions of the existing laws which regulate them...

#### *Article XVII*

All the Turkish Moslem youth, whose families have been registered in the annual lists of emigration and who are still in the ranks of the Yugoslav army, will be released immediately from military service and will be evacuated at the same time as their families.

Similarly, the Turkish Moslem youth, who live in the regions the population of which has been allocated for emigration within the current year, will not be recruited.



### *Article XIX*

The departure and embarkation of the emigrants will be done on the basis of Turkish collective passports which will be issued to them by the consular authorities of the Government of the Republic of Turkey in Yugoslavia. The Turkish collective passports as well as all the other necessary identification papers previously issued by the Yugoslav authorities for the preparation of the annual lists and the respective exit visas of the passports will be done absolutely gratis.

### *Article XX*

A mixed Turko-Yugoslav commission, consisting of agents appointed by the two Governments, will be constituted in the free zone of Yugoslavia in Salonica, which, in joint agreement, will take charge of all the measures arising from the circumstances for the disembarkation, assistance and embarkation of emigrants.

### *Article XXI*

This Convention comes into force on the date of its ratification by the two Governments.

Drawn up in the French language  
in the year 1938

M.R. - V.M. (\*)

H.S. - Dr. C. A. (\*\*)



## NOTES

\* Abridged from the review *Gjurmime Albanologjike*, Series of Historical Sciences, no.12, 1982, Prishtina 1983.

1 *DASIP*, Poslanstvo u TURSKOJ F.31 D.II/9 pov.: Stenografske beleške XXXIII red. satanak p.987.

\* Reference is to the expulsion of the Albanian population of the Moslem faith.

\* The Yugoslav delegates, respectively Milan Ristic, head of the Balkan Section in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Voislav Magovcevic, inspector at the Ministry of Agriculture (ed.'s note).

\*\* The Turkish delegates, respectively Hasan Ceka, head of the Turkish Section of the Economic Council of the Balkan Entente, and Djevdet Atasagon, Director General for the emigrant population, at the Ministry of Hygiene and Social Assistance (ed.'s note).



## CONVENTION WITH TURKEY FOR THE EMIGRATION OF THE MOSLEM POPULATION FROM SOUTHERN SERBIA (\*)

At the meeting of the Council of the Balkan Agreement of February last year (1938), on the initiative of Turkey, it was decided to hold the conference in Istanbul to conclude the agreement on the emigration of the Turkish population from Yugoslavia to Turkey. This problem has been on the agenda of our foreign policy for years.

The Conference of our delegates and the Turkish ones met in Istanbul in June 1938. Also present, as observers, for a good part of its proceedings, were delegates of Greece and Rumania.

Our delegates and the Turkish ones compiled and signed the text "ad referendum" of a convention, the main provisions of which are as follows:

1. 40 000 Moslem families from Southern Serbia (i.e. from the territories which after the wars of 1912 and 1913 belonged to Serbia and Montenegro), will emigrate from Yugoslavia to Turkey.

2. The emigration will be carried out during six years (1939-1944) and may extend one more year beyond that limit.

3. For each emigrant family Yugoslavia pays Turkey 500 Turkish lira; of these amounts 30 per cent will be in foreign currency, while the remaining 70 per cent will be deposited in dinars in the Popular Bank on account of the Turkish Government. With these deposits the Turkish Government can buy commodities from Yugoslavia.

4. The former payments will be disbursed twice a year, in April and October.

5. *This Convention has to do solely with the rural population; here our state can make the emigration compulsory regardless of the will of the contracting population. (\*)* For the urban population the emigration is optional, that is, only if the Moslem citizens desire it.

6. *The Convention has been drafted in such a way that it will be applied not only to the Turkish population, but also to the Albanian population; the emigration of the Albanian population is its real secret aim.*

7. *The fixed assets of the rural emigrants become our state property. Apart from the payment to the Turkish state of 500 Turkish lira for every emigrant family, our state does not have to pay anything to the emigrants for their rural property (fields, pastures, farm houses, etc.).*

8. The emigrants have the right to take with them their liquid assets and some of their livestock; transportation by railway to Salonica will be provided by our Government, and beyond that, by the Turkish Government.

9. The Convention confirms the following program of emigration and the payments...

\* Italics added -ed.

### NOTES

\* Top secret document which explains the aim of the convention. DASSIP, Belgrade, Fund: Poslanstvo u Turskoj, F. 31, D. II/9.



Dr. BOGDAN KRISMAN  
Zagreb-Yugoslavia

### Dr. IVO ANDRIC'S REPORT ON ALBANIA IN 1939 (\*)

... The Italian foreign minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, returned to Yugoslavia in January 1939 and held frequent, long and confidential talks with Stojadinovic in Belje and Belgrade... In these talks they devoted their greatest attention to Albania, in regard to which Stojadinovic informed Ciano that there were two possible solutions: 1) that they should replace King Zog on the Albanian throne with a worthier person, although he himself did not know who this might be; 2) that Italy and Yugoslavia should divide Albania between them. As for this, he added that he could not discuss it then, because he had not studied the problem in detail. Nevertheless, while Stojadinovic spoke about the *division* of Albania, Ciano always spoke about *rectifications of the border* with Yugoslavia!

After Ciano's departure, Stojadinovic asked the ministry to find the respective studies on Albania and the problem of the division of the Albanian territory. Two internal studies on this had been kept: one by Ivan Vukotic, a senior officer of the ministry, on February 3, 1939, and the other by his (Stojadinovic's) assistant at that time, Ivo Andric, on January 30, 1939...(1)

Vukotic begins like this: "Immediately, from the outset, I will say that the annexation of Northern Albania and some parts of Central Albania to our country is one of the most vital interests of our people. This would be realization of our natural aspiration and the satisfaction of our age-long desires ...". In our political and diplomatic alliances and in our Balkan policy", writes Vukotic, "we have always aimed to defeat all the Albanians' demands for the creation of an independent state, simply for the reason that this state could be created against us and against our national aspirations." In this case Vukotic also mentions the following: "While the Ambassador's Conference in Paris defined the borders of Albania, Pasic held talks with the Italians in July 1921, and gave his approval for the division of Albania between us and Italy, provided that we reached the more suitable solution than that which had been envisaged in the Treaty of London of 1915. Our Government at that time had not agreed to this proposal and nothing was done about it ...

"In 1926 more serious efforts were made for the last time for centering our relations with Italy on the Albanian problem. Then, too, the efforts failed for many reasons." Vukotic continues: "The question arises why our official circles were afraid of dividing Albania with Italy. Arguments were brought up that Italy, as a great power and a non-Balkan state, should not be permitted to take steps towards the Balkans." Such a rapid increase in the international strength and importance of Italy had not been foreseen. It was believed that Albania could not consolidate its positions for many years and "we would strengthen our position in Albania, if we could displace Italy. None of these predictions, on which our policy of the independence of Albania had been based, was realized. On the contrary, everything turned out quite the opposite

...

In such a state of affairs, it is simple and clear that it is in our interests to ensure that Italy should hold only a part of Albania and not the whole of it. When there were no other arguments for the division of Albania, this alone would be sufficient." 2) According to Vukotic, "because of its geographical position, Albania is a hindrance to the economic development of the Yugoslav state, while with the division of Albania our land border would be reduced by about 300 km. " 3) The Albanian state and the monarchy are centres of attraction for a considerable number of Albanians who live in our country along the border. With the occupation and annexation of Northern Albania, the Albanian irredentists who are a threat to our



southern provinces would be killed. The militant Albanian element in our territory would be encircled from east and west and would more readily submit to assimilation. 4) Whenever the division of Albania has been discussed, the most that we demanded was to reach the valley of the Shkumbin River. Certainly, the line Struga-Librazhd and Elbasan-Durres would fully satisfy our demands. This territory has about 400 000 inhabitants, 130 000 of them Catholics, 50 000 Orthodox, and the remaining 200 000 or so Moslems. "The division of Albania and the annexation of its northern and central provinces to our Kingdom would be a great national success for us and the realization of our natural aspirations. Our geographical position on this part of the border would be improved. Incalculable economic gains would be made and two important provinces of Zeta and Vardar would be united with natural links. Albanian irredentism (!) and the Albanian state, which had been thought of and created by our enemies, would be liquidated." Therefore, Vukotic concludes that we must take advantage of the favourable situation and complete a great popular project with the division of Albania.

Andric's study amounts to 12 printed pages of cyrillic text ...

"Conducting a friendly policy towards one another, Italy and Yugoslavia have reached agreement on Albania on the following basis: Italy has its vital interests in Vlora, this piece of the Albanian coast must not be threatened by us. We must understand and respect this interest. The vital interest of Yugoslavia is that the border of Southern Serbia, or Kosova (inhabited by the Albanians), or Shkodra and Montenegro, should not be endangered...

In this way, the pact of friendship of March 25, 1937 is a tolerable "modus vivendi" between us and Italy as regards the Albanian territory, over which there have been so many clashes and suspicions over many years.

The other issue is whether this ceasefire in Albania could withstand the test of some graver and more complicated situation in the Mediterranean Sea and the Balkans...

In assessing this whole question, it must be borne in mind that we must seek in every way to avoid a conflict, either open or disguised, with Italy. Likewise, we must avert the contingency that Italy occupies the whole of Albania, where it would endanger us at many sensitive spots in the direction of Boka-Kotor and Kosova.

Bearing in mind all that we said above, the division of Albania may seem to us only as an obligatory and unavoidable evil which cannot be helped and a great harm which we have to make the best of, that is, choose the lesser of the two evils.

Our compensations are found in the material compiled twenty years ago when the question of the division of Albania was raised.

The maximum we demanded at that time was that the border would pass along the Mat and the Drin i Zi Rivers and which would give us strategic security of Montenegro and Kosova. We ought to secure, also, the tectonic valleys of Ohri Lake and Prespa Lake, annexing Pogradec and the Slav villages of Golloborda, as well as those between Prespa and Korça.

The taking of Shkodra would be, in this case, of great economic and moral importance. This would give us the possibilities to carry out major hydro-technical projects and gain fertile land to provide food for Montenegro. Northern Albania within the borders of Yugoslavia would enable the creation of new lines of communication of Northern and Southern Serbia with the Adriatic.

With the division of Albania, the centre of attraction for the Albanian minority of Kosova would be eliminated and, in this new situation, that minority would be assimilated more readily. In the long run, we would gain another 200 000 - 300 000 Albanians, but most of them are Catholics whose relations with the Moslem Albanians have never been good. Likewise, the migration of Moslem Albanians to Turkey would be done under new circumstances, because there would be no powerful action to prevent it."



## NOTES

\* Abridged from the review *Casopis za savremenu povijest*, Zagreb 1977, no.2 (24), year IX. The author of the article dwells extensively on the diplomatic and political career of Dr. Ivo Andrić, from its beginnings until his promotion to the post of the assistant of the foreign minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Milan Stojadinović, who was simultaneously prime minister. The following excerpts present some aspects of the Yugoslav state platform of the 1930s towards Albania and the Albanians, in general, including the Albanians of Kosova and other regions which had been annexed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

1 Arkiv Jugoslavije, Fond Milana Stojadinovića, div.37.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE ALBANIAN POPULATION OF KOSOVA AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANLW

LEFTER NASI

Senior Scientific Researcher

#### THE SPECIAL FEATURES AND RESULTS OF THE ANTI-FASCIST NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR IN KOSOVA

With the fascist occupation in April 1941, the territory of Yugoslavia was divided up between various occupiers. This fate was shared by the Albanian regions, a part of that country. Under the Vienna agreement, signed in April 1941 by the foreign minister of nazi Germany, Von Ribbentrop, and the foreign minister of fascist Italy, Ciano, the Albanian area was split between German, Italian and Bulgarian occupiers.(1)

Because of the conditions on the eve of the Second World War, the organization of the anti-fascist national liberation war in the region had a number of its own features.

The fact is that the relations inherited from the past between the Albanians, on the one hand, and the Serbs and Montenegrins, on the other, were bitter. The blame for this falls not on the peoples, especially the Albanians, but on the annexationist policy of the Serbian monarchy. In the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the Serbian and Montenegrin monarchies, partitioned Albania five times with the aid of the imperialist Great Powers. Even the great victory of the Albanian people, the proclamation of the Independence of Albania, was quickly followed by one of the grave injustices of this century in Europe; Albania was cut in half and Kosova and other Albanian regions were annexed to Serbia by force.

The policy of violence and terror, deportations and colonization, mass confiscations and denial of elementary national rights pursued towards the Albanian people and their territories, convinced Albanian that the Serbian and, later, the Yugoslav monarchy were symbols of this permanent enemy and synonymous with evil.

In these conditions, the war of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia against fascism was closely linked with the solution of the national question. Through their participation in the common war against fascism, the Albanians in those regions, as a fragmented people, aimed to achieve their liberation from the nazi-fascist yoke and to fulfil their legitimate national aspiration on the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination up to secession. Here we are not speaking of limited territories or national minorities, but territories which amounted to half the area of the homeland and a population almost as large as the other part of the Albanian nation. This population was compact, homogenous and native in its own territories. The eagerness of a people to participate in the war against the occupier depended on the analysis of this problem in a principled way and the creation of premises for its complete and final solution. A people cannot be involved in insurrection and war if it does not know why it is taking part in it and what its prospects are.

In Kosova, Dibra and other regions, though the Albanians made up the overwhelming



majority, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia led the war. For this reason, the Albanian communists, who were operating in or were sent to Kosova and other parts from Albania, placed themselves under the CPY. This step, however, had to be approved by the broad popular masses. The Albanian population of Kosova had no faith on Yugoslavian Communist Party and its communists. This was due to the chauvinistic and anti-Albanian policy followed in Serbia and Yugoslavia during half a century, to the unjust treatment of the national and agrarian question, and to Party's sectarianism in connection with the admission of elements from the Albanian group. With the fascist occupation, the organization of the CPY in Kosova became even more difficult. Thus, in December 1941, the Party had only two local committees there, in Peja and Mitrovica, with a total of 150 members. Half of them lived in Peja, came from the ranks of the colonists, and carried on limited work among the Slavs. There were only 30 Albanian communists in Kosova, and half of them had been sent from Albania after the occupation of Yugoslavia. The CPY was weak among the Kosova Albanians and the name of Yugoslavia was attached with the past anti-Albanian policy. The democratic elements and the communists in those parts felt and saw this better than anybody. For these reasons, in November 1941, Ali Shukriu, in the name of the local committee of the party organization of Mitrovica informed the Regional Committee of Kosova that on November 28, the anniversary of the Proclamation of the Independence of Albania, they had decided to put out a leaflet in which they appealed to the Albanians to unite in the struggle against the occupiers. He pointed out that, in this case, it was impossible to release the leaflet in the name of the CPY, because, in this way, it would lose the support of the broad masses instead of winning them. Under these circumstances, he asked: "Could we sign the leaflet simply as the Local Committee of the Communist Party for Kosova and Metohija?" (2)

It should be noted that the use of the name of Yugoslavia in the documents of party organizations at this time and later was regarded as difficult, not only in many parts of Kosova but also in other places such as Macedonia and Slovenia. (3)

The mobilization of the Albanian population of Kosova in the Anti-fascist War was complicated following some concessions worked out by the fascist administration to the benefit of the Albanian population of Kosova, after the occupation. Under Serbian and Yugoslav monarchies, the Albanians were in more difficult position compared with the other peoples and national minorities there. Not only were their elementary democratic and national rights denied, but, what is more, they were "enslaved and destined to be wiped out" (4) through programmes of assimilation and denationalization. The intolerable policy had produced such a profound hatred that the Albanian masses could hardly wait for the regime to be changed. The defeat of Yugoslavia in April 1941 made their circumstances even worse. Some of the officers of the Yugoslav troops in those parts tried to blame Albanians for this defeat. The Yugoslav treated the Albanians as unreliable and, moreover, subjected to terror and mass killings the Albanians and the young men conscripted in the ranks of their army. Such things occurred in Mitrovica, Vuçiterna, the Ibri Valley and elsewhere. (5)

The Italian and German occupiers were well aware of the oppression and, especially, of the Albanian armed resistance in pre-war Yugoslavia. They presented themselves in the role of "saviours" and "liberators" who would "accomplish the desires of the Albanian population for national unity." The policy of the fascist administration came with the proclamation of "freedoms" in language, schooling, publishing, and an organization of the Albanian Quisling administration. The solution of the national question, which the Italian fascist claimed to have provided through the decree of August 1941, and the creation of "Greater Albania", was a manoeuvre because they enslaved the whole Albanian people and liquidated the political independence of Albania. By this means, the fascists tried to win the support of the discontented masses and to transform these parts into a base against the national liberation movement in Albania and Yugoslavia. But they had no success in their efforts.



Collaborationists of all hues living in Kosova and other areas placed themselves in the service of the fascist occupiers. Albanian collaborationists strove with all the means to incite feuds and national hostilities and to keep ablaze the fear of a return to old Yugoslavia. They presented the national liberation movement of the peoples of Yugoslavia as a struggle aimed against the Albanians, and the Albanian communists as foreign agents. Right after the occupation of these territories, especially in the Dukagjin Plateau, they set up bands of looters who plundered and burned the homes of colonists settled by force by the Yugoslav monarchy on lands that had belonged to the Albanian population. Some of the colonists returned to their old places, some others sought refuge in towns and many were protected by the Albanian population.

However, it was not only the Serbian and Montenegrin populations and their properties that were the target of the terror and reprisals of the occupiers and their lackeys, but all the people who lived there and, especially, the members and the sympathizers of the national liberation movement regardless of nationality. To stop the extension of the armed struggle, the fascists arrested people in Gjakova, Prizren, Prishtina, Mitrovica, Peja, Tetova and Dibra, burnt down the market-place in Peja - the damage was calculated at 8 million Albanian francs - and massacred the innocent population. Victims of the terror of the fascists and the armed bands of the reactionary chiefs were the Slav communists B.Vukmirovic, A.Marovic, V.Lakcevic, S.Tomazini and others, and the Albanian patriots and anti-fascists E.Duraku, H.Dushi, R.Sadiku, M.Bajraktari, Z.Hajdini, M.Bekteshi, G.Terbeshi, Xh.Doda and others. More than 6 000 sons and daughters of all the peoples who lived in Kosova.

The work of Serbian reaction, represented by the *cetnik* movement and headed by Draza Mihajlovic, also complicated the situation in Kosova. This movement, around and in Kosova, strove in every way to consolidate and preserve its ranks, to organize collective vengeance on the Albanian population in a favourable situation. Its programme envisaged the purging of the country from the "Albanian national minority" which received the "blame for the defeat of April" and the revenge against the Albanians of Kosova, the Dukagjin Plateau, Drenica, Kollashin, Lebana and Ibri. (7) To achieve its aims, the *cetnik* movement undertook a continuous campaign of terror. An especially deep impression was made on the mass of the Albanian population by the massacre organized by the *cetnik* bands led by Pavle Djuricic, with the aid of the Italian occupiers; mainly against the Slav population of the Moslem faith in Bihor, within a few days of January 1943 more than 4 000 people were killed without distinction as to age or sex. (8) The *cetnik* detachments, which ravaged Kosova, were strong and organized. The German information service pointed out from Mitrovica in April 1944 that Zika Markovic, the commander of the *cetnik* corps of offensive in Kosova, was ready to place himself and his 4 000 men under German command. (9) According to reports of German commands, in mid-September 1944, the Albanian quisling troops, which "were operating in the Albanian-Montenegrin border zone, had been showing signs of disintegration for some time. Desertions had increased so much that forces capable of military operations no longer existed." In these circumstances, the Hitlerite command was obliged to charge "the Montenegrin *cetnik* detachments from Berana" with the security of the border zone in Rozaja. (10)

The task of mobilizing Albanians in the war had to be completed under these circumstances. To achieve this, all that accumulated bitterness created through years of suffering and privations had to be overcome and the difficulties created by the demagogical policy of the occupier and reaction had to be solved. It was the duty of the CPY, which undertook to organize the war in these areas, to work out a clear, concrete and trustworthy programme so that the Albanians would rise in struggle against the occupier. Only by openly proclaiming the right of self-determination up to secession and by publicizing that this implied all possible ways, the right of these Albanians to unite with the motherland Albania or remain within Yugoslavia as an entity with a special status, could the CPY rely on the brilliant fighting traditions of



Albanians for their mobilization. Moreover, the fascist occupation, through its political oppression and economic exploitation, made Albanians natural allies in the common national liberation war of enslaved peoples. It was of special significance for uniting the Albanians in the war that their patriotic spirit should be aroused, that they should carry the Albanian flag next to the Yugoslav one, that they should get greater representation in the new state which would be created in the course of the war.

However, instead of committing itself to the completion of these major and complicated tasks dictated by the political situation of Kosova, the CPY continued with its old policy. The intensive work with the masses of the Albanians produced the results the national liberation movement achieved in Gjakova and Dibra. Emin Duraku conveyed this success of the work in Gjakova to the Regional Committee. In his discussion at the meeting of the Regional Committee, held in February 1942, he emphasized that in Gjakova, as everywhere else in Kosova, the influence of the CP of Yugoslavia had been weak before the war, while, after the occupation, had carried on in especially difficult circumstances. Not without a purpose, he dwelt on the results achieved by the national liberation movement in Gjakova. (11) The links with the countryside had been cemented and were created the conditions of involving the people in the anti-fascist war. (12)

With the fascist occupation, the bulk of the Albanian territories in Yugoslavia fell in the Italian zone. From the organizational stand-point, the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau was to play a leading role in the national liberation movement in Kosova under the Italian, German and Bulgarian occupation. (13) Following the 5th National Conference of the CPY, held in Zagreb in October 1940, this committee was placed directly under the control of the CC of the CPY, (14) because of the delicate national problem of the Albanians and the structure of the population in this region.

Meanwhile, in the Albanian regions of the east such as Tetova, Dibra, Gostivar, Kerçova, Struga and in most of the regions under Bulgarian rule, in which the Albanians comprised an overwhelming majority, this role was played by the Regional Committee for Macedonia which, in the spring of 1943, became the Communist Party of Macedonia under the CPY. In the Albanian regions of the north such as Ulqin, Tuz, the Regional Committee of the CPY for Montenegro, Boka and Sandjak provided the leadership of the party organizations.

This structure extended also to the leadership of partisan detachments and the organs of power. Such a fragmentation of the leadership of the party, the state and the organization of the NLW in the Albanian regions, did not assist in strengthening the war efforts and even less in the unification and the solidarity of the Albanians against the occupiers. Moreover, until the spring of 1943, the Regional Committee of Kosova had no direct line with the CC of the CPY. Only in April of that year were the contacts established. (15) The authentic documents of the time and the studies of Kosova writers show that the national liberation movement in Kosova had made links with the national liberation movement in Albania, and with the national liberation movement in Macedonia. (16)

There representatives of Kosova were not summoned to any of the meetings of the forums of the party or those of the ANLW of the peoples of Yugoslavia. In the collected documents published to date, which contain comprehensive materials about the NLW in Kosova, we can observe that the CC of the CPY addressed only two letters directly to the Regional Committee of Kosova and in one of them it attacks and invalidates the decisions of the National Liberation Conference of Kosova. (17)

For its part, the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, in leaflets and through its activity on the eve of the war or after occupation, appealed and strove for the organization of the armed struggle. However, the disparaging attitude of the leadership of the CPY influenced the policy it followed and created difficulties for the participation of the Albanians of this region in the war. The arbitrary assessments of the Regional Committee,



which stressed that the conditions were not favourable for the organization of the armed struggle in Kosova, mean abandoning the armed struggle, (18) and they were a major obstacle in this direction. The statements of the regional forums, which put in doubt the readiness of Albanians to take part in the war, fostered distrust in this population (19). As a result of this state of affairs, both in the composition of the Regional Committee and in its functioning, there was almost nothing Albanian, although the Albanians made up an overwhelming majority in Kosova. Of the 15 members of the Regional Committee in October 1942, only four were Albanian. "Even certain Albanian communists known for their political and organizational abilities and the activity they carried out among the masses were not included" in the Committee. (20)

The reports of the Regional Committee for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau to the Central Committee of the CPY, on August 21, 1942, state that there were six committees and two party organizations with 49 cells. In this period, there were 363 communists in Kosova, of whom only 55, or 12 per cent, were Albanians. (21) With this national composition of communists in the leading organs of the struggle was trying to maintain in Kosova, it could not play the role that belonged to it in the organization and leadership of the national liberation movement which could not be developed without the participation of Albanians.

Despite these difficulties, the Albanian national liberation movement in Yugoslavia grew steadily. The freedom-loving, patriotic, progressive and democratic traditions of the population, its political oppression and economic exploitation by fascism, its aspirations to decide the future for itself after the victory over fascism, helped in its growth. The successful development of the national liberation movement in Albania, (22) exerted a powerful influence.

In the border regions, particularly, the national liberation movement grew according to age-long traditions of the struggle for freedom, and such regions as the highlands of Gjakova and the zone of Dibra became secure bases for the partisan units and the Regional Committee, the Main Headquarters of the NLA of Yugoslavia for Kosova, and the movement in other regions. The echo and influence of the Albanian Anti-fascist National Liberation War among the Albanian brothers in Kosova was pointed out by the Regional Committee. (23) For his part, S.V.Tempo, on August 8, 1943, informed the CC of the CPY that he had requested the aid of the CPA for the mobilization of the Albanian masses in Kosmet. According to him, up to this period, this assistance had consisted of the sending of a number of Albanian party members and the dispatch of two partisan *çetas* which, in cooperation with the partisan detachments, would arouse the Albanian masses in the National Liberation War. (24) These patriots and antifascists who were sent to Kosova brought with them the experience of the National Liberation struggle in Albania, and, as the contemporary sources and historiographic literature of Kosova and Yugoslavia have admitted, they became the main leaders of the national liberation movement, creating new state power which emerged from the war, and forming partisan units. (25) They were not transmitters of the fascist ideology or fascist spies, as some renegades of the national liberation movement have tried to present them; they were antifascists, who gave their lives for the common ideals which inspired all the enslaved peoples in the war against fascism. (26) The organization of the armed struggle in Kosova and other Albanian territories began with the organization of guerrilla units; in the second half of 1942 Albanians created *çeta*, organs of state power, and the illegal press.

Partisans from the border zones of Albania took part in the detachments created in Kosova, Dibra and elsewhere. Likewise, partisans from Kosova, Dibra and other parts joined the detachments in the border zones of Albania. This is clear evidence that for many Albanian patriots, the problem of the borders between Albania and Yugoslavia, both of which were occupied, would be solved finally after the victory over fascism, on the basis of the desire of the people and by applying the principle of self-determination up to secession. In these circumstances, it was necessary to organize the armed struggle and to find suitable ways to



ensure the mass participation of the population in the war for liberation.

An expression of the upsurge of the armed struggle was the formation in October 1942 of the Regional Main Headquarters which, in the spring of 1943, became the Main Staff of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau. Like the main headquarters in other regions of Yugoslavia, the task of this one was to organize and guide the activity of partisan detachments there. At the same time, like the staffs in other regions, it was directly subordinate to the Supreme Staff of the NLA of Yugoslavia.

Meanwhile, despite all the obstacles and difficulties, the national liberation movement grew steadily in Dibra, Tetova and elsewhere, inhabited mainly by Albanians. From the spring of 1943, the regions of Dibra, Tetova, Kerçova made up the first operational zone of Macedonia. (27) Thanks to the stand of the Albanians, these were the regions where the national liberation movement grew more rapidly than the rest of Macedonia. The Albanian communists, however, although they were the first who sparkled off and assisted the organization of the anti-fascist war in these regions, did not take part in the CC of the CP of Macedonia, in the Party Committee of the first operational zone or even in the secretariat of the districts of Tetova, Gostivar, Mavrova and Kerçova, Struga and Dibra. (28)

The national liberation movement of the Albanians gradually assumed broad dimensions at the time of the capitulation of fascist Italy. Early in September 1943, more than 2 500 villagers from the highlands of Gjakova and townspeople forced the Italian garrison to surrender its weapons. In the Albanian parts of Dibra, the liberated territory was extended further. It lay between Gostivar and Struga, while in the east, it reached the zone of Bulgarian occupation. (29) From September to November 1943, this territory became a base for strengthening the movement in Kosova and Macedonia. The Kosova battalions "R.Sadiku" and "B.Vukmirovic" were formed there. In November 1943, these battalions, together with the *çeta* of Sharr, joined the ranks of the 1st Macedonian-Kosova Brigade, which was the first big partisan unit in Kosova and Macedonia. In mid-September, the "Bajram Curri" battalion was formed in the territory of the highlands of Gjakova, while the "Youth" battalion and the Albanian battalion of Kerçova operated in Dibra and Kerçova.

The growth of armed struggle in these regions can be seen in the holding of the National Liberation Conference for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau from December 31, 1943 to January 2, 1944 (the Conference of Bujan). (30) The conference, as the first and only meeting of this forum during all the years of the war, occupies a prominent place in the history of the ANLW in Kosova. (31)

This movement in Kosova and other Albanian regions came into open confrontation with the sectarian stands and line of the leadership of the CP of Yugoslavia, especially in the second half of 1943 and throughout 1944. Thus, the party organizations, the commands of the partisan detachments, were engaged in struggle against the anti-albanian attitude of the Yugoslav leadership represented by its delegate S.V.Tempo. The accusations made by the leadership of the CPY against the Albanians, alleging that they had "Great-Albanian sentiments", "illusions about fascism", "tendencies to become a reserve of the nazis and reaction", ran counter to the assessments made by the leaders of the National Liberation Movement in Kosova at the Bujan Conference. They were intended to conceal the political line of the CPY, which was expressed in the wrong conception and handling of the Albanian national problem. This line was quite apparent in the decisions of the 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Yugoslavia held at Jajce in November 1943, which were taken from above in an arbitrary way, without the participation of representatives of the peoples who lived there and who did not take part in the meeting for they were not summoned to it. In this way, the leadership of the CPY violated the principle of cooperation between two parties and two National Liberation Movements. It had agreed that the question of the future borders between Yugoslavia and Albania would be adjusted through fraternal agreement and in cooperation between the NLA of



Yugoslavia and the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Yugoslavia, on the one hand, and the ANLA of Albania and the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Albania, on the other, that is, by the two parties, by the people's democratic regimes that would be established in Albania and Yugoslavia, and by the population there on the basis of the principle of the right of people to self-determination. (32)

The leadership of the CPY hindered and sabotaged the strengthening of the national liberation movement and its transformation into a general armed uprising. In fact, the leadership of the CPY was not interested in a powerful revolutionary movement in Kosova and other Albanian regions because this would constitute a major obstacle to the plans it was secretly hatching for the future of this population. At the same time, it intended to exploit these circumstances at the appropriate moment to justify among the public the oppression of the Albanians and the suppression of any opposition on its part to the handling of the national problem. It would be easier for it to present the suppression as a struggle against the "counter-revolutionary, nationalist or Ballist forces", than against the Albanian population and the fighters from its ranks, who would be incorporated into the National Liberation Army. It intended to and did use the accusation about "the lack of a powerful revolutionary movement" during the years of the war as a pretext to deny the realization of national rights to Albanians.

The documents of the time show that, after the capitulation of Italy, those regions became more conscious of the defeat of the forces of the fascist bloc. In its proclamation of September 9, 1943, the Main Headquarters of Kosova put forward the task of intensifying the struggle against the German and Bulgarian occupiers and increasing the participation of the Albanian population in it, because this was the only road to their liberation.(33) But, while the Albanian population, in late 1943 and early 1944, was growing more conscious of the defeat of the nazi troops, the organizations of the party should have strengthened their work and leadership among the masses, but in reality the opposite was occurring. The influence of the Regional Committee of Kosova and the party organizations of Dibra was growing weaker. This was a logical result of the sectarian line being pursued against Albanians. Moreover, at the end of 1943 up to the middle of 1944, a good part of the Regional Committee, which formed the political leadership of the armed struggle, was shifted from Kosova to Montenegro. (34) The entire activity of the secretary of the Regional Committee of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau consisted of two letters sent to the party organizations in the terrain. For its part, through the letter of March 28, 1944 to the Regional Committee for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, after it had studied the decisions of the Bujan Conference, the CC of the CPY, from far away and from above, demanded the withdrawal of cadres from Kosova, leaving there only a minimum number of cells, eventually small, just enough to spread its influence, to distribute the press and to carry out diversionary actions. (35)

These stands and actions not only affected adversely the war waged in these regions, but also hindered its further spread. They left the occupiers and its lackeys a free hand to intensify their hostile activity, to misrepresent the national rights of the Albanian people, and to exploit them to reach their own goal. Despite the disruptive stand of the Yugoslav leadership and the difficulties it created, the struggle of the Albanians in Yugoslavia was not interrupted.

In 1943, the Regional Committee for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau had been turned into a Provincial Committee. Two regional committees for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau were attached to it. (36) The two zones formed separate operational staffs.

The activity of the partisan *çeta* operating in the operational zone of the Dukagjin Plateau, and that of the partisan detachments in the district of Dibra, where the National Liberation War had been closely linked with the movement developed in Albania was extremely crucial for the growth of the movement in Kosova and the other Albanian territories. The process of the differentiation of political forces was going on all over Kosova and the ideals of the war for liberation were spread more widely to the urban and rural population.



Under the influence of internal and external factors, in the second half of 1944, the armed struggle in Kosova turned into a popular movement. This was accompanied with the deepening of the crisis in the ranks of the lackeys of the occupiers and the quisling government, with the disintegration of its armed forces and the increase in desertions from their ranks.(37)

The mounting armed struggle included the fighting in Dibra by the detachments of the ANLA and Macedonian detachments, the direct aid of the population of Dibra, Tetova, Gostivar for the liberation of those centres, and the formation in September 1944 of the 4th Brigade with sons of the Albanian population.

In this period, in Kosova alone, 8 brigades, 3 battalions and 2 *çetas* were formed. At the end of the war, it had 53 000 volunteers in various partisan units. These sudden changes in the situation in Kosova resulted from the patriotism and readiness of its population to take part in the war. The deployment of large detachments of the ANLA to Kosova also helped in suddenly changing the situation there. This move was made at the request of the Supreme Staff of the YNLA. In August 1944 the Yugoslav military mission in Albania delivered to the General Command of the ANLA the request of the Supreme Staff of the YNLA that it should send its detachments north of Drini River. (38) On September 14, the general staff of the ANLA, ordered the Command of the Ist Army Corps of the ANLA to allocate two brigades to cross into Kosova. (39) The leadership of the ANLA considered the fightings in Kosova as an important step that would influence and help strengthening the cooperation between the two neighbouring countries in the war, and would settle once for all the historical injustices of the past.

These actions were welcomed by the population dwelling there and they also determined the warm, fraternal attitude shown to the detachments of the ANLA in Kosova, the active participation of the population in the war in separate detachments or in the detachments of the ANLA or the YNLA. That time became obvious the aims the CPJ wanted to achieve through the detachments of ANLA in Kosova.

The Supreme Staff of the YNLA and the Main Headquarters of Serbia and that of Macedonia ordered 4 Albanian brigades and thousands of other volunteers to march deep into Yugoslavia. Thus, about 35 000 men from Kosova and other parts went to the north of Yugoslavia. They took part in the fighting against the nazi troops in the direction of Kosova-Nis-Belgrade and on the Srem front, or served in the central regions of the country and assisted in the liberation of Sarajevo, Zagreb, and Trieste up to May 15, 1945, when the last detachments of the German army in Yugoslavia capitulated. In these battles, thousands of Albanian partisans from Kosova, Dibra and other areas laid down their lives. Thus, on the road to the north of Yugoslavia, the 7th Brigade of Albanians from Dibra and Tetova with 2 500 volunteers was reduced by half and was used to complete the ranks of the 42th Macedonian Division. After it was left with an effective strength of 1 400 men, in the second half of April 1945, it suffered more than 800 casualties in fighting against the enemy, who was protected in bunkers surrounded by barbed wires, on the Srem front, at Truncic, Tovarnik, Palanka and Budrova. (40)

\*

\*

\*

The war and the blood shed by thousands of Kosova fighters and volunteers who fell fighting for the liberation of their territories and in aid of other peoples of Yugoslavia comprise a major contribution of this population to the common cause of the peoples who fought against the nazi-fascist yoke. But while the Albanians expected that after the victory they would achieve their national aspirations through the practical implementation of the right of peoples to



self-determination, on orders of the leadership of the CP of Yugoslavia, military administration was established in Kosova on February 8, 1945. The all-sided oppression imposed on the Albanian population, as well as the course pursued for the handling of the national problem of this population were the continuation of the notorious policy under which they had suffered in the years before the Second World War.

#### NOTES

1 For greater detail see A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Movement in Kosova 1941-1945*, Prishtina 1971, pp.112-113.

2 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o narodnooslobodilackom ratu Jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom.I, knjiga 19 (Borbe na Kosovu, 1941-1944), Belgrade 1969, doc.3.

3 A.Hadri, *Gjakova in the National Liberation Movement*, Prishtina 1974, p.80.

4 J.B.Tito, *The National Question in Yugoslavia in the Light of the National Liberation War*, "Proleter", December 1942.

5 *Mitrovica and Its Environs*, Mitrovica 1979, p.257.

6 The Yugoslav publications have begun to ignore these great truths completely. See *Kosovo-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989. S.Djakovic, "The Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the National Liberation Struggle and the Revolution in Kosova and Metohija".

7 *Central State Archives (CSA)*, fund 249, year 1942, file II-52, fasc. 1, See also fund 266, year 1942, file 206, fasc.1.

8 *Ibidem*, fund 253, year 1943, file 218, fasc.1

9 *Mitrovica and Its Environs*, Mitrovica 1979, fasc.393.

10 *CSA*, fund 254, year 1944, file 179, fasc.36.

11 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc. 42.

12 *Ibidem*.

13 H.Hoxha, *The Struggle of the CP of Yugoslavia for the National and Social Liberation of Albanians in Yugoslavia*, "Perparimi", Prishtina 1972, no.1, p.6.

14 *Ibidem*.

15 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc.27.

16 *Ibidem*.

17 *Zbornik dokumenata ...*, doc.104.

18 *Idem*. doc.15.

19 *Ibidem*, doc.15, 21, 32, etc.

20 H.Bajrami, *Partisan Detachments. Bajram Curri*. Prishtina 1985, pp.41-42.

21 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc.21.

22 *Ibidem*, doc.10, 11, 19, etc.

23 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc.38.

24 *Ibidem*, tom. VII, knj.1, doc.41, 97. Letter of S.V.Tempo to the CC of the CPY, August 8, 1943.

25 *Ibidem*, tom.I, knj.19. Letter of S.V.Tempo to the CC of the CPY, August 8, 1943.

26 *Kosovo-Past and Present*, S.Djakovic, *The Communist...*, pp.126-130.

27 V.Ivanovski, *Osloboditelna vojna vo zapadno Makedonija, 1941-1944*, Shkup 1973, p.129.

28 *Ibidem*, pp.129-130.



29 M.Kodra, *The Worsening of Diplomatic Relations Between Italy and Bulgaria*, "Annual of Kosova Archives", Prishtina 1974, p.135.

30 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova-Metohija 1943-1953*, Prishtina 1955, p.10.

31 See A.Lalaj's article *On the Bujan Conference* published in this book.

32 H.Bajrami, *Partisan Detachments ...*, instructions of S.V.Tempo for the CC of the CPY for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, October 2, 1943.

33 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc.46.

34 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Movement...*, p.352.

35 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka ...*, doc.104.

36 *Ibidem*, doc.52.

37 *Archive of the Institute of History*, German file., sec.311, reel 183, doc.65721/3. Report of army corps "E", Oct.6, 1944. *Ibidem*, reel 185, doc.65721/10. Information to Commander-in-chief of the Southeastern Front. CSA, fund 254, year 1944, file. 156, fascs. 114-115.

38 I.Antonovski, *Formiranje i razvoj kosovsko-metohijskih NOU brigada i njihova dejstva u toku narodnooslobodilackog rata, 1941-1945*, in "Kosova", no.4, Prishtina 1975, p.102.

39 *Documents of the General Staff and the General Command of the ANLA*, vol.II, Tirana 1976, p.166.

40 T.Taipi, *The Albanians on the Srem Front*, in "Rilindja", Prishtina, July 26, 1982 - August 6, 1982.



ANA LALAJ

Senior Scientific Researcher

## ON THE BUJAN CONFERENCE

It is no accident that a great deal has been said about the Bujan Conference. This is dictated firstly by the weight of this event, indeed, the most important in the history of the revolutionary state power and the Anti-fascist National Liberation War (ANLW) in Kosova. Held in the village of Bujan in the highlands of Gjakova, from December 31, 1943 to January 2, 1944, it fulfilled very well the mission for which it was summoned. It gave the broad popular masses of Kosova a correct ideological and political platform, both for waging the Anti-fascist National Liberation War to a successful conclusion and for the principled solution of their national question. At the same time, this conference set up the National Liberation Regional Council of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, as the supreme political organ for the mobilization of all Kosova people in the war against the common enemy and as an organ with a series of tasks and special rights as the supreme power. Without going into details, these are adequate reasons why this event merits the honour of the generations which experienced it and those which follow.

In the assessment of the conference there is also a second view, held by uncontrollable extremist individuals who have engaged in the most vulgar political or historical manipulations. Among them, there are politicians, historians, and even former participants in the conference and its leading forum. In their comments, articles and interviews and in various monographs, they pour out torrents of words as if competing who can denigrate this event most. They are striving at all costs to prove that it was inspired by great-Albanian ideas. They claim that the number of delegates was not in direct ratio with the national composition of the population of Kosova, or that it was hasty in its procedures, prepared by one or two activists, and that it was not conducted in conformity with the practice of the national liberation movement in the region. These writers allege that the Resolution of the NLRC of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau sanctioned the open territorial claims of Albania on Yugoslavia and that the Serbian and Montenegrin representatives were misled when they signed such a document. And as if a great "discovery," they ask the question: Why was the conference held precisely at Bujan, in a territory which, before the Second World War and to this day, is included into the borders of the Albanian state ? (1)

There is no need to adorn or embellish the Bujan Conference. It remains what it was. The true facts about its preparation and conduct and the conclusions it reached can be easily found in published documents, in the reminiscences of its participants, and in the logic of the events at that time. Any manipulation of it sounds false and is not difficult to refute. If any shortcomings can be identified in its proceedings, for a serious and realistic analyst, they can be explained with the concrete circumstances of the difficulties of the war and illegality.

The idea of the formation of the NLRC in Kosova was an early one. It began to spread after the 1st Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) at Bihace, from 26-29 November 1942, in which directives were issued for creating the national liberation regional councils in Yugoslavia.

As a result of the progress of the National Liberation War in Kosova and a new understanding (2) of the role of revolutionary state power in the non-liberated territory, by the middle of 1942, national liberation councils began to be set up in many towns and villages. (3) At the end of 1942, 81 national liberation councils had been formed in Kosova. (4) On the basis



of this rapid growth, Boris Vukmirovic, secretary of the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova, and Ramiz Sadiku, member of this committee, gave instructions, in February 1943, for calling the founding conference. A series of preparations were made. However, because of the terror the occupiers launched against the bases of the movement in a number of towns in Kosova and the killing of B. Vukmirovic and R. Sadiku, the conference was postponed until later. (5)

A new situation, very favourable to the ANL Movement, arose in Kosova after the capitulation of fascist Italy in September 1943. The formation of national liberation ration councils in towns or villages received a fresh impulse. Along with the aid they had to provide for the partisan units, in the new situation the councils had to perform other more complicated tasks. The historic moment presented the need for an organ to lead and co-ordinate the work of the councils already set up in Kosova.

To this end, the meeting of the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova, at Sharr from November 4 to 6, 1943, with the participation of members of the Main Headquarters of the National Liberation Army for Kosova and representatives of local committees of the CPY for Kosova, decided to set up the NLRC as "a political forum which will be the political representative in the present National Liberation War in Kosova and Dukagjin (6) and will prepare the general armed uprising against the occupiers and their collaborators." (7)

As is understandable on such occasions, a liberated territory had to be chosen so that proceedings of the conference could take place normally. The choice fell on Bujan, a village in the highlands of Gjakova (today Tropoja district), a remote mountainous zone which lay in the borders of the Albanian state before the fascist occupation. Being a completely free border zone under the control of the partisan forces of Albania, the highlands of Gjakova, from the start of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, had been turned into a safe refuge for the Kosova partisan units. Moreover, since the autumn of 1943, the Regional Committee and the main staff of Kosova had been located in the highlands of Gjakova from where the National Liberation War in Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau was directed.

At the Sharr meeting, the Regional Committee, besides giving verbal instructions to the invited delegates in connection with the decisions which were taken, also sent a letter to all regional and local committees, commanding them to commence work immediately for the preparation and election of delegates to the conference. The members of the regional committee went to various towns and villages to spread the idea of summoning a conference and to rally as many supporters as possible. (8) In this way, the Regional Committee engaged the communists of Kosova *en masse* in preparing for the conference. The decision of the Regional Committee of Kosova at the Sharr meeting on the formation of the NLRC of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau was in accord with the line of the CPY, that the organs of new power should be organized in all territories. At the same time, this decision was a continuation of the measures taken by the CPY as early as 1937 for the organization of separate organs of the party and the army for Kosova. The Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova, linked with those of Montenegro, Sandjak and Boka, had been formed in 1937. In 1940, the 5th National Conference of the CPY accepted the request of delegates from Kosova that the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova should be connected directly with the Central Committee of the CPY. The Regional Committee of Kosova retained this status until the end of the ANLW. At the end of April 1943, the Main Headquarters of the NLA for Kosova and Metohija was formed at Sharr and linked directly with the central staff of the NLA of Yugoslavia. Likewise, the Regional Committee of the Communist Youth for Kosova and the Anti-fascist Front of Women for Kosova existed. All these measures show that the formation of the national liberation regional council, which would be elected at the Bujan Conference, would complete the structure of Kosova as a separate unit within Yugoslavia, also, from the stand-point of the state power.

After two months of preparations in conditions of profound illegality, the proceedings of



the founding conference of the NLC of Kosova and Dukagjin Plateau commenced in the village of Bujan in the Gjakova highlands on December 31, 1943. There, for the first time, representatives of all nationalities, Albanians, Serbs and Montenegrins, active members of national liberation councils of towns and villages, fighters from partisan units, representatives of the anti-fascist youth and the anti-fascist women and outstanding communists from all parts of Kosova gathered together. Of the 61 delegates, 49 were present of whom 43 were Albanians and 6 Serbs and Montenegrins. Although the composition of the delegates did not fully correspond to the national structure of the population of Kosova, this shortcoming should not in any way be related to the procedures for the preparation of the conference, but certainly and only to the grave wartime situation, the conditions of profound illegality and the innumerable difficulties of moving in the district. According to testimony of participants, three (9) of the delegates of Serbian nationality arrived after the conclusion of the proceedings, while two others (10) had been killed a few days before its commencement, one of them indeed on his way there. There was also the odd delegate (11) who, although he had been elected, did not attend the sessions at all. In regard to Serbian or Albanian representatives of Kosova in the partisan units which were fighting in the south of Serbia or in the Macedonian-Kosova brigade, they were not informed because it was impossible for them to come to Bujan.

Much ado has been made about the participation of delegates from Albania. The most sensitive point, which at first sight seems to provide a weapon for those who undertake to denigrate Bujan at all costs, is their number - 10 people all told. It is extremely tendentious that this fact should be raised to the level of an argument to characterize the conference as Great-Albanian. The conditions at the time of the conference and the environment in which it was prepared clearly explain this and leave no room for equivocation. These delegates were neither envoys of the Communist Party of Albania nor its top functionaries. They were fighters of national liberation councils in the villages of the highlands of Gjakova and the partisan units operating in that zone, who had assisted considerably both in winning mass support in the war and in ensuring the safety and the smooth running of the proceedings. At the Sharr meeting in November 1943, it had been said explicitly that the national liberation council which would emerge from the Bujan Conference would have as its main duty the uniting of the people of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau in the war against fascism. The concrete cooperation between the forces of the national liberation movement in Albania and those in Kosova had long been helping in this. On the request of the CP of Yugoslavia, Albanian communists and cadres, various literature and other materials had been sent there from Albania.

At the conference, besides two reports which were discussed in a principled manner, the draft-resolution was discussed and adopted unanimously. Applying the principle of the equality of the two languages, proclaimed by the Regional Committee from the beginning of the ANLW, the resolution appeared in the Albanian and Serbo-Croat languages, thus leaving no room for failure to understand it or for any misunderstanding. This fundamental document was in full conformity with the reports and the contributions to the discussion. After dwelling on the favourable international political and military situation and the difficult condition of Albanians in the Yugoslav Kingdom, the resolution highlighted the gradual strengthening of the NLW in Kosova and that the Albanian population of Kosova day by day was understanding the real content of the fascist regime as a regime of national, political and economic enslavement. It pointed out that all the peoples of Kosova, regardless of political, national or social differences, were taking part in the armed struggle against the occupier and that the partisan and volunteer *çetas* had been created and were striking heavy blows at the fascist occupiers and local traitors. The resolution also defined the character of the NLRC as "a joint organ in which all the political trends and honest patriots would take part without distinction as to nationality, religion, political outlook or social position." (12) It had the duty to explain to subordinate councils that, in the conditions of that time, they were "organs of war against the



occupier and embryos of the future people's state power." (13) Besides aid for the war with every means and the mobilization of the maximum number of people..., they had to organize campaigns of assistance for the families of those who had been imprisoned, interned, or forcibly deported, who had fallen in the battle, and who fought in the National Liberation Army. (14)

The resolution also dealt with the national problem of Kosova in a principled way, approaching it on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination up to secession. Without pre-deciding the issue, the resolution pointed out that an essential preliminary condition to win the right to self-determination was the armed struggle of the peoples of Kosova against fascism. "Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau is a region inhabited in the majority by the Albanian people, which today, as always, desires to be united with Albania," says the resolution. "Therefore, we feel it our duty to indicate the right road the Albanian people must follow in order to realize their aspirations. The only road by which the Albanian people of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau can be united with Albania is the war in common with the other peoples of Yugoslavia against the blood-thirsty nazi occupier and its paid agents, because this is the only way to win the freedom in which all the peoples, hence the Albanian people, too, will have the possibility to decide their own destiny through the right to self-determination up to secession." (15) At the end, the resolution presented the tasks the future NLRC would have to undertake.

The NLRC of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, elected at the conference, consisted of 42 members, with a standing committee of 9. Mehmet Hoxha was elected chairman of the standing committee, Rifat Berisha and Pavle Jovicevic vice-chairmen, while Zekirja Rexha, Xhevdet Doda, Milan Zecar, Fadil Hoxha, Ali Shukria and Hajdar Dushi were members. (16)

Much rumour has been made of the alleged national disproportion in the membership of this forum. Comparing it with the composition of the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova, where, of 12 members, only 4 were Albanians, (17) with the 5-member bureau of this committee of which only 1 was Albanian, (18) or with the main staff of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army for Kosova where the Albanians had only one representative, (19) we can say that the Standing Committee of the NLRC for Kosova and Dukagjin Plateau, with 22 per cent Serbs and Montenegrins, was the only forum which, more than any other regional leading organ, responded to the national structure of the population of Kosova where the Albanians represented more than 3/4 of it.

The founding conference sent telegrams of greetings to the highest forums of the national liberation movement in Yugoslavia, Albania and Kosova.

The NLRC addressed an appeal to the Albanian, Serbian and Montenegrin peoples of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, in which, after informing them of the holding of the Bujan Conference, its purpose, the participation of delegates and its decisions, it called on the inhabitants to further strengthen their fraternal spirit and unity and to take part resolutely and in large numbers in the war against the occupiers and their lackeys with the aim of finally liberating their region. "The joint armed struggle against the occupier and his agents is the only way in which you will win you freedom and the right to self-determination up to secession," (20) said the appeal.

The course which was followed for the creation of this council and the tasks with which it was charged show that it was not only the highest political organ for the mobilization of the people in the anti-fascist movement, but also the supreme *de facto* organ of state power which was emerging in the heat of the armed struggle. Having the duty to establish new subordinate councils in the towns and villages of Kosova and to co-ordinate and guide their work, while the existing ones were recognized not only as organs of the war but also as embryos of the future people's power, the NLRC of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau assumed and carried out tasks of state power. In the context when the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova and the Main Staff of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army for Kosova had the same attributes and



competences as the highest organs of the party and the army in Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Croatia, the historic significance of the creation of the NLRC of Kosova and Dukagjin Plateau becomes even more obvious. This council recognized and brought out the special status of Kosova during the years of the anti-fascist national liberation war, when it linked itself with and was commanded directly by the central organs of the party, the army and the state of Yugoslavia.

Immediately after the founding conference, all its materials (the resolution, the appeal and the telegrams of greetings) were published in Albanian and Serbo-Croat languages in the newspaper *Liria-Sloboda* about the middle of January 1944; they were duplicated in several hundred copies, in much larger numbers than usual. These materials went to all the party committees and national liberation councils in Kosova and leaders of the party and the national liberation councils of Yugoslavia and Albania. From the district committees and national liberation councils in Kosova, which had acquainted themselves with the materials, there came no criticism at all. On the contrary, in the reports which they sent back, they stressed that the conference had powerful repercussions both in the ranks of supporters and sympathizers and amongst those who were still wavering and were not clear about the aims of the national liberation war. The latter had believed that the way out would be found only in the joint war with the other peoples of Yugoslavia against the occupier and its lackeys. (21)

The universal approval of the documents of the conference and the echo it aroused among the masses are proof that it was not an accidental event or the product of any pressure or deception by "separatist" or "irredentist" forces. The representatives of Albanians, Serbs and Montenegrins of Kosova had the opportunity to freely express their freedom-loving aspirations and complete determination to give an even more powerful impulse to the armed struggle against the fascist occupier and its lackeys. The Bujan Conference was the culmination of the successes achieved and a logical result of the national liberation movement. It was an historical necessity of this movement, which was linked inseparably with the setting up of the new democratic people's state power and with the aspirations of the Albanian population of Kosova to achieve its right to self-determination.

The Bujan Conference and its decisions received a similar welcome in Albania, too. In the article, "A Blow for the Pseudo-patriots of Greater Albania (the Bujan Conference)" published in the bulletin of *Zeri i popullit* of February 7, 1944, the Albanian patriots expressed their joy over the holding of this conference as a crucial event for consolidating the foundations of the people's power, for the further intensive waging of the armed struggle, and for the juridical sanctioning of the right to self-determination of the Albanian population in Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, a right which could be realized only through an armed struggle. (22)

The top leadership of the CPY hastened to express its opinion on the Bujan decisions. The CC of the CPY sent a letter to the Regional Committee of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau on March 28, 1944, where it hailed the National Liberation Council elected at the Bujan Conference and recognized it as a political organ for the mobilization and unity of the masses in the war against fascism.(23) A few months ago, on 28-30 November, 1943, the Initiatory Council for the creation of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Macedonia and the Anti-fascist National Liberation Councils in Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Croatia, which were charged with the same duties and given the same competences as the National Liberation Council of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau had been recognized as the supreme organs of people's power in their regions at the Second Meeting of AVNOJ. In such circumstances, the recognition of the Regional National Liberation Council of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau by the CPY as a political organ independent of those of Serbia and the other regions of Yugoslavia, was a formal juridical constitutionalization of Kosova as a federative unit. The existence of this Council as a political organ besides the Regional Party Committee and the Regional Military Staff consolidated the status of Kosova as a separate territorial political unit



in the context of the Yugoslav Federation in no way connected with of dependent on Serbia.

In the letter of March 28, 1944, the main criticism is directed at those parts of the resolution in which the delegates had openly and courageously expressed the national aspirations of the Albanians and correctly and clearly defined the way to their realization. This letter went on: "Today comrades, we are working not to divide the borders of Yugoslavia and Albania, both of them occupied by the Germans, but so that both are liberated from them through armed struggle. Hence, *the presentation or settlement of such a debatable issue today would be completely wrong.*" (24) (our italics - A.L.). Here we have to do with an alteration or distortion of the resolution. At the Bujan Conference, the question of the division of the borders between Albania and Yugoslavia was not on the agenda at all. The armed struggle against fascism until victory was placed first, as the resolution pointed out. Only after the successful conclusion of this war would the Albanian population of Kosova have the possibility and the right to decide for themselves about their future. Hence, the Yugoslav leadership "was not faced with an accomplished fact" (25) in the Bujan resolution. It was a continuation of the promises Tito had made at the beginning of the war in an article "The National Question in Yugoslavia in the Light of the National Liberation War", published in the magazine *Proleter*, which pointed out that "the present people's liberation war and the national question in Yugoslavia are indivisible... The question of Macedonia, *the question of Kosova and Metohija* (our italics - A.L.), the question of Montenegro, the question of Croatia, the question of Slovenia, the question of Bosnia-Hercegovina, can be easily settled satisfying all in general. Only in this way will the people themselves decide and each people gains this right rifle in hand, in the present National Liberation War." (26)

To prove the correctness of stands maintained at the Bujan Conference on this problem we could produce other documents of the CPY. For instance, the letter of S.V. Tempo, the delegate of the CC of the CPY in Macedonia and Kosova, addressed to the Regional Committee on April 15, 1943 in which he instructed that "the communists of Kosova must ... form the joint anti-fascist national liberation front of the peoples on the platform of the joint war against the occupiers, on the platform of self-determination after liberation." (27) We can cite also the conclusions of the meeting of the Regional Committee of the CPY for Kosova in November 1943 at Sharr which says that "the Albanian masses must be told that the present national liberation war will bring them complete freedom, independence and the right to self-determination of all peoples." (28) And, finally, the way in which the Bujan resolution dealt with the national problem of Kosova was in conformity with the principle proclaimed at the 2nd meeting of AVNOJ, according to which, the newly created Yugoslav Federation was built "on the basis of the right of each people to self-determination, including the right of secession and unification with other peoples." (29)

The historical moment at which the Bujan conference was summoned demanded as a necessity the consolidation of the new state power and the defining of a clear perspective on the settlement of the national question in Kosova, two fundamental problems of the ANLW. With the aim of giving an impulse to and extending the anti-fascist war in Kosova, the delegates considered these two problems in a principled way and not at all from "an Albanian and anti-Yugoslav stand-point." (30) The problem of borders has been placed on the agenda not at the Bujan Conference, but at the 2nd meeting of AVNOJ. It was this meeting which proclaimed the unification of the Slovenian coast with Slovenia, as well as the unification with Croatia of the Peninsula of Istria, Rijeka, and Zara, (31) etc. territories which, before the war, Italy had annexed. There the decision was taken, and it came into force immediately, to create Yugoslav Federation of the respective peoples of Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Macedonia, Croatia and Slovenia. (32) However, no delegate from Kosova had been invited to attend that meeting. The name of the people of Kosova or the Albanians was not mentioned in any document of AVNOJ along with the peoples of Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and



Bosnia-Hercegovina, as it had occurred a year earlier (1942) in Tito's article in the magazine *Proleter*. This meant that the special position Kosova had gained during the war, the direct links of its main party and army organs with the respective central ones of Yugoslavia had been openly placed in doubt. In this context both the categorical stand taken on March 28, 1944 by the Yugoslav leadership against the resolution of Bujan and the silence in which it tried to pass over this historic event, are understandable. Their aim was to nip in the bud any attempt of the Albanians to have their say in an independent way and to put into practice the right to self-determination. Notwithstanding that publically they declared their support for the principle of self-determination up to secession, in reality the top Yugoslav leaders nurtured other ideas and had other plans about the solution of the problem of Kosova. In the official meetings in Vis in June 1944, between Tito, Bakaric and Kardelj, the latter declared: "If any kind of decision about Kosova were to be taken on the basis of the abstract meaning of the principle of self-determination up to secession, this would greatly weaken our struggle in Serbia and would give exceptionally strong arguments for the Serbian bourgeoisie and Draza Mihajlovic, who would accuse us of breaking up Yugoslavia." (33) Meanwhile Mosa Pijade and Sreten Zujovic, in meetings of the same level, were to express their support for settling the problem of Kosova through "the creation of federative links of Yugoslavia with Albania." (34)

These statements, in line with the stands in the 2nd meeting of AVNOJ and with the letter of March 28, 1944, allow us to say that the Yugoslav leaders did not intend to deal with the problem of Kosova in a principled way, but moreover, they conditioned the settlement with the ambitions of the Serbian bourgeoisie and, even worse, with the absorption of the whole of Albania. The attachment of Albania to Kosova and the inclusion of both within the borders of the Yugoslav Federation under the government of Yugoslavia was the final aim of the Yugoslav leaders in their "solution" of the problem.

"Conclusions" drawn recently by a section of the Yugoslav historiography, alleging that the Bujan Conference "was illegal", (35) that its delegates "had fallen under the influence of the Great-Albanian clique", (36) and that the blame for it falls on "the Kosova communists who had emigrated to Albania before 1941..., organizationally linked with the CPA... and participants... in the preparation of this conference," (37) are nothing but a part of that organized campaign in Yugoslavia today which is demanding the denigration of the Bujan Conference. First, it must be understood that the dispatch of Albanian communists to Kosova by the CPA was done on the request of the CPY itself. It must be understood, also, that upon their arrival in Kosova, they worked conscientiously to win the sympathy of the Kosova masses, to make the situation clear to them and to convince them and draw them into the war against the fascist occupier. Many of them laid down their lives in the war against fascism. The leaders of the ANLW in Kosova have acknowledged "their valuable aid for the consolidation and development of the national liberation movement in Kosova." (38) It is logical that some of them would be elected and would take part in the Bujan Conference, but it is illogical, ill-intentioned and tendentious to make the accusation that they and all the delegates were in reactionary Great-Albanian positions... (39) Such terms have nothing in common with the Bujan Conference and do not correspond to the historical truth. The resolution and all the documents are evidence of the efforts to continue and strengthen the national liberation war of Albanians, Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosova against fascism and reaction. The Bujan decisions were a blow to the nazi occupiers and local traitors who aimed to extinguish the national liberation movement and to incite chauvinist feelings amongst the Albanian, Serbian and Montenegrin peoples of Kosova.

Regardless of the many misrepresentations which have been and are being made of the Bujan Conference, its value remains unaltered in the memory and conscience of the Albanians of Kosova. Its resolution and other documents represent the opinion of the most progressive forces about the problems which concerned the peoples of Kosova during the years of the war.



By the irony of history, however, today, just as four decades ago, the Bujan Conference is still confronted with the constant anti-Albanian attitude of the leadership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. In December 1988, one of the highest Yugoslav state forums, the Federal Chamber of the Assembly of Yugoslavia, took the absurd decision to annul the resolution of Bujan. The examination of the main document of the Bujan Conference 44 years later in such a forum testifies both to the outdated, discredited and chauvinist ideology which guides the leaders of the Yugoslav party and state; it testifies to the strength and current value of the resolution of that conference. The Yugoslav leaders forget that juridical acts can never erase the history of a people.



## NOTES

- 1 B.Petranovic, *AVNOJ and the Bujan Conference*, in: "Kosovo-Past and Present", Belgrade 1989, pp.138-146.
- 2 From the end of 1941 to May 1942, national liberation funds had been created in Kosova, which were considered organs of the Liberation movement in the occupied zones, but which had to carry out tasks only of an economic character. It was believed, mistakenly, that the national liberation councils should be set up only in the liberated territories.
- 3 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Councils in Kosova*, Prishtina 1974, p.34.
- 4 *Ibidem*, p.44.
- 5 A.Hadri, *The Participation of the Peoples of Kosova and Metohija in the National Liberation War and the Popular Revolution of the Peoples of Yugoslavia*, "Perparimi", Prishtina 1957, no.6, pp.455-457.
- 6 This meeting also took the decision to change the name Metohi to Rrafsh i Dukagjinit, because this part of the territory of Kosova has been known by this name by the local population from very remote times.
- 7 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Councils in Kosova*, Prishtina 1974, p.68.
- 8 *Rilindja*, June 23, 1987, p.8.
- 9 *Rilindja*, June 23, 1987, p.8. The reference is to Basko Cakic, Stanoje Aksic and Milos Gilic.
- 10 *Ibidem*.. The reference is to Peko Tepavcevic and Milan Glogovac.
- 11 *Rilindja*, June 23, 1987, p.8. The reference is to Predrag Karaferic, delegate of Prizren.
- 12 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova-Metohija (1943-1953)*, Prishtina 1955, p.9.
- 13 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova-Metohija (1943-1953)*, Prishtina, 1955, p.9.
- 14 *Ibidem*.
- 15 *Ibidem*.
- 16 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova-Metohija (1943-1953)*, Prishtina 1955, p.9.
- 17 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Movement in Kosova, (1941-1945)*, Prishtina 1971, p.171.
- 18 *Ibidem*..
- 19 *Ibidem*, p.48.
- 20 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova-Metohija (1943-1953)*, Prishtina 1955, p.13.
- 21 *Rilindja*, December 30, 1978, p.4.
- 22 *Zeri i popullit and its bulletins (1942-1944)*, vol.3, Tirana 1986, p.129.
- 23 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o narodnooslobodilackom ratu Jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom 1, knj. 19, doc.104, Belgrade 1969, pp.461-466.
- 24 *Ibidem*.
- 25 B.Petranovic, *art.quoted*.
- 26 J.B.Tito, *The National Question in Yugoslavia in the Light of the National Liberation War*, "Proleter", December 1942.
- 27 See A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Movement ...*, p.203.
- 28 *Zbornik dokumenata...*, p.314.
- 29 V.Dedijer, *Dokumenti 1948*, Belgrade 1980, p.20.
- 30 V.Didijer, *Dokumenti 1948*, Belgrade 1980, p.20.
- 31 *Ibidem*..



32 *Ibidem.*

33 See R.Rajevic, *Autonomija Kosova*, Belgrade 1985, pp.229-230.

34 *Ibidem.*

35 B.Petranovic, *op.cit.*, pp.138-146.

36 *Nin*, January 6, 1984, interview by P.Jovicevic, *The Misuse of a Document of the War*.

37 B.Petranovic, *op.cit.*

38 P.Jovicevic, *Politicka situacija i rad Partijske organizacije na Kosovu i Metohiji i 1941*, in: "Ustanak naroda Jugoslavije", Belgrade 1948, pp.226-228.

39 B.Petranovic, *op.cit.*



## DOCUMENTS

### RESOLUTION OF THE 1st CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION COUNCIL FOR KOSOVA AND THE DUKAGJIN PLATEAU HELD ON DECEMBER 31, 1943 AND JANUARY 1-2, 1944 (\*)

The representatives of all parts of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, Albanians, Serbs and Montenegrins: nationalists, communists, anti-fascist youth, communist youth, anti-fascist women, representatives of the National Liberation Army and others inspired by the lofty ideal of the unification of various political trends, for the development and union of the peoples of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, and the strengthening of the organized armed struggle of our peoples against fascist invaders and their lackeys, gathered at the moment when the situation at home and abroad is clear, examined the work of the national liberation councils to date, and elected the Standing Committee of the National Liberation Council.

The Conference noted :

#### I

A) International events are developing very rapidly to the detriment of German fascism, the defeat of which is inevitable and imminent.

The Red Army, smashing the resistance of the Germans, is advancing steadily westwards and is now on the borders of Poland, Finland, Hungary and the Balkans, accelerating the liberation of enslaved peoples. The struggle and efforts of the Soviet Union, which has defeated this fascist beast, make this country the liberator of enslaved peoples.

The capitulation of Italy has resulted from its heavy losses of troops on the Eastern front, as well as from its losses in Africa, in Sicily, in the enslaved countries, and especially in Yugoslavia.

The Anglo-American army is advancing in Italy, assisted by the struggle of the freedom-loving section of the Italian people. The liberated part of Italy makes possible large-scale actions against fascist Germany. The allied airforce is ceaselessly striking lethal blows against the war industry of fascist Germany.

The recent Moscow Conference and the Teheran Meeting and its Declaration have strengthened the powerful and sincere alliance between the Soviet Union, Britain and America. The date and place have been set for the opening of the second front and the direct assault against the "Hitlerite fortress" from the east, the south and the west.

The struggle of enslaved peoples is assuming more and more the character of a general armed popular uprising in France, Greece, Poland, Albania and other countries, accelerating the defeat of fascism.

Pride of place in the national liberation war of enslaved peoples is held by the peoples of Yugoslavia who, through super-human efforts and sacrifices, have created their invincible National Liberation Army which for two and a half years now has been waging an uninterrupted war against the fascist occupiers and their lackeys, liberating more than one third of Yugoslavia. With the war it has waged, the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia has been recognized by the allies as an independent and equal ally.

In the course of this war, the conditions have been created to enable the formation of the



National Committee for Liberation, headed by the commander of the National Liberation Army, Marshal Tito. This committee is the guarantee for the liberation of all peoples of Yugoslavia, for their independence, their equal rights, and their right of self-determination up to secession.

B) The first imperialist war ended with the Treaty of Versailles which, besides other injustices, created Yugoslavia in order to satisfy the hegemonic clique of Great-Serbs, headed by King Alexander. This Yugoslavia, created without consulting the people and against the will of the people, was a unique example of national, political and economic oppression in Europe.

The Albanian people of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau were subjected not only to political, national and economic oppression, but also to physical alienation. All their national rights were denied: (they lacked schools in the mother tongue and their political and cultural development) was obstructed. Their so-called representatives have been faithful agents of the hegemonic clique of the Great-Serbs for robbery and oppression.

The culmination of the economic exploitation was the Agrarian Reform, the purpose of which was: to incite chauvinist hatred between Albanian, Serbian, and Montenegrin peoples; to impoverish the Albanians to such a degree as to oblige them to emigrate and, under these conditions, to form a support for reaction with the reactionary minions in Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau. After the defeat of Yugoslavia, the Albanian people of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, as a people without adequate political consciousness and brought to the point of desperation, were ready to welcome as a friend anyone who would radically overturn the situation. Even the blood-thirsty soldiers of fascism, who had stained their hands with the blood of Albanians in Albania, were presented to them as saviours. The chorus of traitors in Albania: Verlaci, Kruja, Kole Biba and others, united with that of our traitors: Agushi, Draga, Deva, Xhevat, Rifat and Sefedin Begolli and others, formed a joint orchestra to sing the dirge for the unification of the lands of Kosova with the enslaved motherland Albania, lying in the clutches of the Italian fascist imperialism. Taking advantage of the situation of the Albanian masses under the rule of Great-Serb hegemonists, these traitor cliques misled the Albanian people here and did not allow them to hear the true voice of their own sons who said that fascism is the sworn enemy of every people, and, therefore of the Albanian people, too. But it was not long before fascism began to reveal its ugly face as a regime of economic, political and national oppression.

Kosova, the granary of the Balkans, became the prey of the rapacious Italian-Albanian companies, E.A.G.A. and S.A.S.T.E.B. and others. Fascism, with the aid of the fifth column, employed the "divide and rule" policy in Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau. With the assistance of traitors it incited feuds between Albanians and Serbo-Montenegrins, and between Moslems and Catholics, with then aim of hindering the unity of these peoples and extinguishing the freedom-loving flame of our peoples.

Through their uninterrupted work and struggle against the occupiers, the communists and other patriots helped people to begin to see the aim of fascism. In this way, the chauvinist hatred began to diminish and the armed struggle against the occupiers began, a struggle in which all our peoples are called on to take part, regardless of their political, national and social differences. The vengeful rifles of freedom fighters echoed through the mountains, villages and cities. The partisan *çeta* of volunteers, headed by Fadil Hoxha and other military leaders, struck heavy blows at the fascist occupiers and internal traitors (at Karadak of Shkup, Cernaleva, Shemria, Gilan, Shar, Gjakova, Prizren, Peja, Ferizaj, Prishtina, Dibra, Peshkopia, Kerçova, etc.).

When it saw that here, too, it came under attack, fascism, which considers the freedom of any people a danger, hurled itself like a savage beast upon our peoples, terrorizing them in the most inhuman ways (at Mitrovica, Peja, Prizren, Gjakova, Bellac, etc.), killing children before their parents and parents before their children, and throwing them still alive into flames (at Gjakova, Garbolla, Vrella, Vitimirica, etc.).



C) After the capitulation of Italy, Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau were occupied by German fascism, skilled in demagoguery and terror, a cunning invader, that knows how to throw the stone and hide its hand. With the coming of the German occupier, the looting, imprisonment, mass beatings, conscription to the army and obligatory labour, the burning of villages and violent expulsions continued. The German occupiers employed as its agents the most evil and blood-thirsty traitors of the type of Nedic's agent, Xhafer Deva, who engaged in beastly tortures, murders and looting from Ferizaj-Prishtina to Mitrovica, Peja, Prizren and elsewhere. All these things were done to prolong the life of Hitler and the internal traitors.

Today our peoples have understood clearly what kind of freedom the Italian-German fascism have brought them, and that this freedom means national and political oppression and economic exploitation. The Germans keep Kosova as an apple of discord, sometimes they dangle it before the Great-Serb hegemonists, sometimes before the Great-Albanian reactionaries (Balli Kombetar, etc.), exploiting the antagonisms between them for their own military purposes against the National Liberation Movement.

Various enemies of the peoples have rallied around the German occupier in the war against National Liberation Army. The agents of the Balli Kombetar play an important role in close connection with the agents of Draza Mihajlovic. According to the desire of the occupiers, they undertake to drive the Serbian and Montenegrin population en masse from Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau to Serbia, in order to force them in this way into the ranks of Draza Mihajlovic, who, like the bands of Balli Kombetar, is fighting on the side of the Germans against the National Liberation Army. They mobilize the Albanians and send them to fight against the National Liberation Army of the peoples of Yugoslavia and the National Liberation Army of Albania in the interests of the German occupiers. On behalf of Greater Albania, the Albanian Ballists pursue the same policy as the Drazists on behalf of Greater Yugoslavia. The Albanian and Yugoslav reactionaries fear the peoples who have taken up arms to fight for their freedom and rights. Let the Balli Kombetar, the godfather of Draza Mihajlovic, bellow as loud as it likes against the Serbo-Montenegrin danger: the National Liberation War of the peoples of Yugoslavia, which is wiping out the *çetnici*, sworn enemies of the Albanian people, is exposing the falsity of this tale. In the mountains of Montenegro, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Dalmatia and elsewhere, the grave has been dug for the Yugoslav hegemonists, enemies of the freedom of the Albanian people and other peoples.

Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau is a region in which the majority of the inhabitants are Albanian who today wish to be united with Albania, as they have always done. Therefore, we feel it our duty to indicate the right road which the Albanian people must follow to realize their aspirations. The only way for the Albanian people of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau to be united with Albania is through joint struggle with the other peoples of Yugoslavia against the blood-thirsty nazi occupier and its paid lackeys, because this is the only way to win the freedom, in which all the peoples, including the Albanian people, will be able to determine their own destiny through the right of self-determination up to secession. The guarantee of this is the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia and the National Liberation Army of Albania with which it is closely linked. Apart from them, our great allies, the Soviet Union, Britain, and America, also guarantee this (the Atlantic Charter, the Moscow and Teheran Conference).

## II

We, the representatives of Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau, send greetings to the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia, headed by Marshal Tito, and associate ourselves with its just protest against the traitor Yugoslav government in exile in London and



the return of King Peter II. Likewise, we demand that they and all the blood-suckers be brought before the people's court to render account for all their crimes.

### III

The National Liberation Council is not a party, but a joint organ in which all the political trends take part, and therefore, we call on all honest patriots without distinction as to nationality, religion, political tendency or social position to rally around the National Liberation Council in the fight against the occupiers and its lackeys at this decisive moment for winning true freedom. We also call on those who have been in the service of the occupiers and have not stained their hands with the people's blood.

### IV

Our National Liberation Army and the partisan ranks are expanding from day to day. Every day their needs are greater; therefore it is necessary that our people work to assist our fighters.

### V

The Conference elected its Standing Committee consisting of the chairman, two vice-chairmen and six members.

### VI

After reports were delivered and discussed, the National Liberation Council was charged with the following :

### TASKS

- 1) To explain that the national liberation councils, in the present conditions, are organs of the war against the occupier and the embryo of the organs of the future people's state power;
- 2) to popularize the National Liberation Army, to assist the war with every means, and to mobilize as many people as possible in this war;
- 3) to make contact with the councils which have been formed up to date, and set them to work;
- 4) to form national liberation councils wherever they have not been formed hitherto;
- 5) to further strengthen the fraternal links of our peoples (Albanian, Serbian and Montenegrin), continuously struggling against chauvinism; to explain to the broad masses of the people that the chauvinist policy is a weapon in the hands of the occupier and the traitors of the peoples to hinder their fraternization and the waging of the National Liberation War in our province and the winning of freedom;
- 6) to publish its own organ;
- 7) to popularize the National Liberation Army of the peoples of Yugoslavia;
- 8) to popularize the National Liberation Army of Albania;



- 9) to popularize the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia;
  - 10) to popularize the National Liberation General Council of Albania;
  - 11) to use every possible means to hinder the mobilization of the peoples in war against the National Liberation Armies of Yugoslavia and Albania, by explaining to them that whoever fights against the national liberation armies is fighting against himself;
  - 12) to gather documents and evidence of the crimes the fascist occupiers and the traitors have committed;
  - 13) to expose and fight the occupier and reactionary cliques of every hue and not permit the mobilization of the people in the service of the occupier;
  - 14) to popularize the Red Army, led by Marshal Stalin;
  - 15) to popularize the Anglo-Soviet-American anti-fascist bloc;
  - 16) to popularize the fraternity and national liberation struggle of all enslaved peoples;
  - 17) to popularize the fraternity of the peoples of the Balkans;
  - 18) to conduct a campaign of aid for the families of those who have been imprisoned, interned, forcibly expelled, who have fallen in the war, for the families of those whose homes have been burned, and those who are fighting in the National Liberation Army.
- Death to fascism - Freedom to the people !

#### *The Standing Committee*

1. M.Hoxha (1)
2. Pavle Jovicevic (2)
3. R.Berisha (3)
4. Xhevdet Doda
5. Fadil Hoxha
6. Hajdar Dushi
7. Zekerija Rexha
8. (4)
9. (5)

#### *Members of the Council*

Ismail Gjinali (\*)  
 Tefik Canga  
 Qamil Luzha  
 Xheladin Hana  
 Halil Haxhija  
 Ismet Shaqiri  
 Adem Miftari  
 Ismail Isufi  
 Sabrije Vokshi  
 Velisha Mickovic  
 Ljubomir Canic  
 A.Kerim Ibrahim (1)  
 Spira Velkovic  
 Xhevat Tahiri  
 Ymer Pula  
 Et'hem Zurnaxhiu  
 Eng.N.Basha (2)  
 Ajdin Bajraktari

Mehmet Dermani  
 Qamil Brovina  
 Gani S.Cavdarbashi  
 Sul B.Alaj  
 Shaban Kajtazi  
 Ferid Perolli  
 Haxhi Morina  
 Xhavid Sh.Nimani  
 Reshat Isa  
 M.Bajraktari (3)  
 Veli Niman Doçi  
 Rasim Cokli  
 S.Bekteshi  
 Jaho Bajraktari  
 Shaban Haxhija  
 Alush Gashi  
 Beqir Ndou  
 Xhafer Vokshi



Bejto Sahmanovic  
Milan A. Mickovic  
Zymer Halili

Sima H. Vasilevic  
Enver Dajçi  
Maxhun Doçi Nimani

#### NOTES

\* Taken from the volume of documents *The People's Council of the autonomous region of Kosova-Metohija (1943-1953)*" (Fundamental materials from the sessions), Prishtina 1955, pp.7-12.

1 Mehmet Hoxha, chairman of the council.

2 Pavle Jovicevic, vice-chairman of the council.

3 Rifat Berisha, vice-chairman of the council.

4 and 5 As can be seen from the proclamation, elected in the Standing Committee are Milan Zecar from Retkovci, Nerodima region, and Ali Shukrija, student from Mitrovica, whose signatures are not attached because they were not able to attend the conference.

\* Signatures are attached to each name.

1 Abdyl Kerim Ibrahim

3 Engineer Nexhat Basha

4 Mehmet Bajraktari



## CHAPTER 6

# THE OPPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE ALBANIAN POPULATION IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

LEFTER NASI

Senior Scientific Researcher

## EIGHT MONTHS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ALBANIAN POPULATION IN YUGOSLAVIA

(November 1944 - July 1945)

Eight months is a short period in the history of a people; nevertheless, November 1944 - July 1945 was full of significant events and developments for the Albanians of Yugoslavia. For them, the year 1944 dawned with high hopes. The Bujan Conference ended in the first days of the year and Kosova defined its position identical with that of other peoples of Yugoslavia. A resolution of the conference confirmed the sovereign right of the peoples of these parts to self-determination up to secession. In the spring of 1944, a December 1942 article of the leader of the CPY, J.B.Tito, "The National Question in the Light of the National Liberation War", was published in the Albanian language. The main leader of the national liberation movement of the peoples of Yugoslavia emphasized that "the Communist Party of Yugoslavia has not and never will abandon its principle ... that each people has the right to self-determination up to secession." According to him "The question of Macedonia, the question of Kosova and Metohija, the question of Slovenia, the question of Bosnia-Hercegovina can be easily settled, satisfying all, in general. Only in this way will the people themselves decide, and each people gains this right, rifle in hand, in the present National Liberation War." (1)

During the war, the leaders of the CPY had promised that the future of Kosova would be settled by the people who lived there, with the agreement of the parties and democratic people's regimes in Albania and Yugoslavia after the victory over fascism. (2) Regardless of these hopes and the promises, during the years of the war, the leadership of the CPY presented other stands and decisions which, in essence, negated its former declarations. The 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Yugoslavia held at Jajca in November 1943, laid the basis for the creation of a Federal Yugoslavia and defined the status of different units in this context. But the Albanians, who had been treated like other nations before, were not mentioned in these decisions. (3) Kosova was included in the Yugoslav federal state, but its status was not defined; this remained an open problem to be settled in the future. Irrespective of its sharp reaction against the decisions of the Bujan Conference, especially against its stand about the way it settled the national problem of the Albanians of Yugoslavia, the leadership of the CPY did not make any concrete statement about the future of Kosova even at this time. (4) In an article "Kosova and Metohija in the decisions of the second meeting of the ANLC of Yugoslavia", published in the newspaper *Liria* in November 1944, the secretary for the RC for



Kosova, Pavle Jovicevic, did not explain the position proposed for this territory in post-war Yugoslavia, even though he stressed that on the basis of these decisions, the Albanians in Yugoslavia would be guaranteed their rights as a "national minority".(5) Thus, the leadership of the CPY trampled on the aspirations of the Albanian population and blighted its hopes of solving its national problem.

The Albanians became more anxious after the decision of the Supreme Headquarters of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army on September 2, 1944, to transform the Main Staff of Kosova into an Operational Staff and the decision of September 14, to attach it to the Main Staff of Serbia.(6) However, regardless of these declarations and the measures taken during and at the end of the war, the future of the Albanians and the status of Kosova were vague and ambiguous, and it appeared that these problems would be solved after the victory over fascism.

Immediately after the war, all the problems of the future of the Albanian population and Kosova were to be solved within the Yugoslav framework. In post-war Yugoslavia, it was declared that the national criterion would be the foundation stone of the territorial and administrative division of the country. This criterion, however, was disregarded in the case of the Albanians. Although the Albanian regions comprise a territorial whole, are a compact national unit, have a unified territory that extends along the border with the mother trunk and other republics of Yugoslavia, they were fragmented into the federal republics of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. In the central forums of the CPY and the Federation only Kosova, which during the years of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War had clearly defined positions, this problem became the object of discussions. A number of alternatives were proposed about its future within the Federation. The first alternative was that it should be partitioned between the three republics of Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia. It was intended to revive the division of Albanian territories along the administrative pattern of the Yugoslav monarchy, and, concretely its division into *banovina*. The pre-war administrative division reflected the prejudices according to which the Albanians of Yugoslavia were "aliens" and could not constitute a united national whole. For this reason, they were placed between districts where Slavs - Montenegrins, Serbs and Macedonians - made up the majority.

The representatives of Kosova opposed this proposal at a meeting of the CC of the CPY at the beginning of 1945. They declared that the autonomy of Kosova had been recognized as early as 1943 with the formation of the National Liberation Regional Council and that this solution was contrary to the desires and interests of its peoples.(7) This proposal also ran counter to the plans drafted by the topmost leadership of the CPY just before the end of the Second World War. In the discussions held in the Island of Vis in the summer of 1944, about the organization of the new Yugoslav state, Tito, Kardelj and Bakaric had agreed that Kosova should become an autonomous province. As the Main Staff of the National Liberation Army of Serbia declared, it was thought at that time that Kosova would not be part of the new Federal Serbia, but a separate, undefined entity, perhaps like Vojvodina.(8)

The Yugoslav leadership resolved that Kosova should have autonomy within the Yugoslav Federation. They discussed whether it should be represented directly in the Federation, or be annexed to Serbia, Macedonia or Montenegro. However, the leaders rejected the first idea and then considered which federal unit it should be attached to. About the arguments for the annexation of Kosova to one or the other federal units, we need see only the comments of the representative of Montenegro, Marko Vujacic, member of the Presidium of the ANLCY, in February 1945. He declared: "Kosova and Metohija should be given to Montenegro, because Metohija is historically Montenegrin... I think that Sandjak and the two Dukagjins should be united with Montenegro because, in this way, our Montenegro, which made the greatest sacrifices in the war..., this smaller federal unit will be strengthened economically, will be enlarged with the territories closest to it and with people like its own."(9)

Besides "historical rights" and "the territorial expansion", the Montenegrin representative



also tried "to argue" for the dependence of the RC of Kosova on the RC of Montenegro, Boka and Sandjak, a dependence that had been eliminated in 1940 by the decisions of the 5th National Conference of the CPY. In essence, Montenegro wanted to regain the borders of the mediaeval state of Zeta. However, the representatives of the Republic of Serbia could not agree with these "arguments". Under pressure of these representatives, the leadership of the CPY, also, reversed its stand. At a meeting of February 1945, it finally decided that Kosova should be an autonomus region within Federal Serbia. (10)

The Serbians advanced various arguments for the annexation of Kosova to Serbia. For some, the "national criterion" served as an "argument". According to them, the Serbian population, a good part of which had been settled as colonists between the two world wars and made up the largest number of the Slav minorities in the region, would naturally request unification with the Republic of Serbia. Others thought that, since the other autonomus unit, Vojvodina, would be united with the Republic of Serbia because of its national composition, it would be better for the two to be included in the same republic. In both cases, when the Serbs constitute a majority and when they are a minority in relation with the other peoples, they have the right to choose the federal units to which they will be attached. Some suggested that Kosova was the most backward region from the economic stand-point. It could overcome it with the help of the largest unit - the Republic of Serbia. Finally, it was said that the union of Kosova and Serbia would strengthen the unity-fraternity between Albanians and Serbs and eliminate their antagonisms inherited from the past.(11) But this decision was also a compromise with old prejudices, cultivated and fostered by the Serbian and Yugoslav monarchies and by the reactionary circles in Serbia and the clergy, about "Serbian Kosova", and the leaders of Yugoslavia and Serbia were not free of the same biases. It is more than clear and time confirmed it later that these prejudices could not enhance the friendship between peoples.

The first public announcement of the annexation of Kosova to Serbia came at a meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Assembly of Serbia in April 1945. Rankovic made it known when he declared that "this unification is the best answer to those who trumpet the danger of 'the partitioning of Serbian territory', who accuse the National Liberation War of weakening the Serbs on account of the Croats and others."(12) For his part, the secretary of the National Liberation Regional Council of Kosova, Dusan Mugosa, underlined that the opinion for the annexation of Kosova to Serbia was the desire of the Chairmanship of the National Liberation Council of the region. According to him, such a decision had not yet been taken in the region, because military rule existed there. (13)

In general, all the historiographical literature and the Yugoslav publications present this declaration as an expression of the desire and will of the population of Kosova.(14) Analysis of the facts shows the opposite. D.Mugosa's speech at the National Liberation Assembly of Serbia shows that. The documents of the time reveal that the leadership of the CPY settled everything which had to do with the future of the Albanian regions and Kosova, in particular. The Presidium of the National Liberation Council of Kosova had emerged from the Bujan Conference. At that time it had nine members, seven Albanians and two Serbs or Montenegrins. During the war, three of its members were killed, two of them, Albanians, and a Serb. In February 1945, five new members were coopted to the Presidium of the Council, all of them Serbs or Montenegrins. Now it had 11 members, five Albanians and six Serbs or Montenegrins. These changes were contrary to the national structure of the region's population. The proposals and decisions about the future of Kosova aggravated the discontent of the Albanian population and even the main leaders of the party organization in those regions were forced to admit this themselves. Thus, Djoko Pajkovic charged with the task of the secretary of the RC for Kosova, in the speech, he held at the Founding Congress of the CP of Serbia in May 1945, speaking about the problem of the future of Kosova, admitted that "... our party organizations were afraid to open this question. The opinion existed that this question was not



for discussion. (15)

From these admissions, it turns out that, after the war, the problem of joining of Kosova to the Republic of Serbia was a "taboo theme", while, during the war, even the question of the northwestern borders of Yugoslavia was not regarded as such.

The leadership of the CPY and the Republic of Serbia presented the decisions on the future of Kosova also at the 2nd Session of the National Liberation Council of the Region of Kosova, held in Prizren from the 8th to 10th July 1945. What had been previously determined by the forums of the Federation and Serbia was to be finalized in Kosova. Milentije Popovic, the delegate of the Republic of Serbia, explained the tasks facing the forum of the region. According to him, "the question of what status Kosova and Metohija will have today, in this phase of the popular movement, is an administrative matter, a matter of regulation of the administration and not a political issue. Therefore, this is not fundamental. The more important question in Kosova and Metohija is the further strengthening of the fraternity and unity of the peoples of Kosova and Metohija." (16)

This analysis of the problem makes it clear that Kosova as an autonomous unit was not part of the Republic of Serbia, but had a special position equal with that of other parts of Yugoslavia, including Serbia itself. The act of its annexation to the Republic of Serbia is a consequence of the political combinations which came about after the war and after the creation of the Republic of Serbia.

\*

\*

\*

The national problem of the Albanians in Yugoslavia and Kosova, in particular, was taken up and solved at the time when the units of the NLA of Yugoslavia had entered these regions. Their entry was accompanied with a savage campaign of terror and genocide and fierce attacks and accusations against the Albanians. These criticisms were made openly at the 3rd Conference of the Regional Committee of Kosova, held in the second half of March 1945, at which it was announced that this Committee should break off its links with the CC of the CPY and become subordinate to the Provincial Committee of Serbia. (17) The Secretary of the Provincial Committee of the CPY for Serbia, Blagoje Neskovic, pointed out, among other things: "You do not have anyone in Kosova and Dukagjin Plateau who does not own a rifle, and these people could rise in insurrection at any moment." The Serbian representative declared, "In Kosova there can be no talk about a political victory, because we are a very long way from it there. The people are not with us. We see that most of the Albanians are against the National Liberation Movement." According to him, "because of their religious customs and national traditions, the Albanians were linked with the aghas and beys, and this made the bonds between the Albanian masses and Albanian reaction powerful." (18) For the leaders of the CP of Serbia, "the Albanians maintained a hostile stand towards the National Liberation Movement, because they did not understand the difference between the old and the new Yugoslavia." (19) These forums and leaders of the CP of Serbia denied the share of the Albanian people in the war against fascism and identified them with the stand of Albanian reaction. These assessments appeared at a time when Tito, in his discussions with the delegation of the Albanians of Kosova in April 1945, had admitted the role of this population in the war (20) and said also that the encitement of national hatreds by fascism was characteristic not only of Kosova but also other parts of Yugoslavia as Bosnia, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. (21)

Despite these statements of the leadership of the CPY, however, it is a fact that the



Croatian people were never identified with the *ustasi* of Pavelic and the *četniks* of Draza Mihajlovic never with the Serbian people. While the Albanians were presented as collaborators of fascism, were held responsible for the defeat and capitulation of the troops of the Yugoslav monarchy, and were accused of the crimes committed by fascism. They said these malicious lies to impose a pre-determined solution of the Albanian problem on the federal organs which were discussing the future of Kosova.

The operations to drive the fascist troops out of Kosova, undertaken by the detachments of the NLA of Yugoslavia and commanded by the Main Staff of the NLA of Serbia, marked the beginning of the anti-Albanian terror. This campaign became intense especially in November-December 1944, and continued afterwards at the same level. The Serbian *četniks*, who had been incorporated into units of the NLA of Yugoslavia,(22) played a special role in this.

The army presented its campaign of terror and genocide against the Albanian population as a struggle against the reactionaries and their remnants. But the Serbian official forums and press identified reaction with all those who were for the just solution of the national problem according to the principles drawn by the leadership of the CPY during the war; it included those who "were unable to understand the autonomy of Kosova" and who dared to ask the natural question: "What do we Albanians want in Yugoslavia?". They called reactionaries those who opposed the campaign of violence and terror by military detachments, who demanded concrete measures to implement the principle of national equality and to be represented in the new organs of power, as well as those who wanted to re-examine the colonizing agrarian reform undertaken by the Yugoslav monarchy before the war. An idea of the representation of Albanians in the organs of power can be made from this; after the liberation of Ferizaj, the national liberation council had 8 members of whom only one was Albanian.(23)

As for its aims and methods and the propaganda which fostered it, the genocide against the Albanians of Yugoslavia immediately after the Second World War was no different from that under the royal dynasty. Before the war, the Albanians were described as "unreliable" and "harmful" for the existence of Yugoslavia. It is clear that, after the war, "the reactionary and chauvinist Albanians" could not bring any benefit to the Yugoslav state. These opinions and attitudes made it inevitable that, after the war, notorious elements in the political life of Serbia like Vasa Cubrilovic became active once again to reformulate the projects for the deportation of that population in the new circumstances and to present them to the top leadership of the CPY and the National Liberation War of Yugoslavia.

The anti-Albanian terror began in the peripheral zones, but it soon spread to all the Albanian regions. Besides the regular Serbian, Montenegrin and Macedonian detachments, the organs of the Yugoslav OZNA(24) also had a role. The organs of the party and the state existed only in name but the military command made the law. The operations of different units followed one after the other over the whole territory. The military increased its presence rapidly. Kosova alone had several divisions totalling 40 thousand men.(25) It was a burden on the Albanian population to supply these forces. At the same time, this people had to provide food and other means of livelihood for the colonists in the province. The military operations involved completely arbitrary actions against the defenceless innocent population. The attacks concentrated especially on the regions with a solid population of Albanian nationality. They were treated in general as profoundly reactionary zones closely collaborating with the enemy. The OZNA service prepared special lists of those who would be eliminated, imprisoned or interned in the concentration camps specially built during this period. The Yugoslav military detachments denied the Albanians even the elementary national rights they had won during the armed struggle. The delegation of Albanians of Kosova, in a meeting with Tito in April 1945, protested against these attitudes and demanded that the Albanians should keep their national flag and use the Albanian language, since the Marshal had promised them the same rights as the



other peoples of Yugoslavia.(26) In describing the actions of the Yugoslav military detachments in Kosova, in the congress of the C.P. of Serbia, it was admitted that "the unjust hostile policy that was applied towards Albanians in 1918, was repeated there." Hence, the Albanian population "believes that nothing has changed from the time of the old Yugoslavia."(27) In one of its reports, the staff of the 3rd Army Corps of the Albanian National Liberation Army, which had sent its detachments to assist the Yugoslav national liberation units, reported that in Kosova "people have been killed by the NLA. It is apparent that it has many chauvinists and provocateurs. A large part of the people of these parts are in the mountains. The people of Kosmet do not trust the Yugoslav National Liberation Army at all... The pulling down of the Albanian flag in the towns of Kosova and Metohija, the murder of the Albanian delegation in Drenica and that of 20 persons from the highlands of Gjakova..., without any reasons, the mass killings in Drenica, the loss of people during the night without anyone knowing where they are gone, have aroused great revolt among the people of Kosmet against the Yugoslav National Liberation Army."(28)

The terror and genocide by the Yugoslav detachments revolted the Albanian patriots, democrats and the partisan units.

Above all, however, the genocide during this period affected the mass of the population and added to their insecurity and worry. This policy was bound to cause the justified revolt of the masses of the Kosovar peasantry and the partisan units. Thousands of Albanians refused to submit to the chauvinist rule and terror.

The revolts began after the liberation of those zones. On December 2, about 2 500 peasants attacked and surrounded the town of Ferizaj and threatened to capture it and take prisoner the forces of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army there. The attack was launched at the same time as the commencement of the operation on December 2, 1944, the declared aim of which was to "smash the remnants of reaction." The operational staff hoped that the operation would be extended over almost the entire province and that, along with detachments of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army, the Albanian National Liberation Army would also take part, before they marched to the north of Yugoslavia. On the basis of the orders of the operation, it was expected that the units of the ANLA would operate in the region of Drenica, where the situation was "very difficult", "reaction had the strongest base and was centered there." According to assessments of the operational staff, "the largest enemy groups amounted to 700 persons"..., which tried to link up with others in Kosova, and in some villages of this sector were attempting to organize the masses for resistance.(29) However, the forces of the ANLA found in Drenica a situation quite different from that depicted by the Yugoslav staffs. The population was worried. The reports about the terror by the Yugoslav detachments had spread here, too, and some of the people had to seek shelter in forests. Nevertheless, it took the brigades of ANLA only five to six days to normalize the situation, to set up the organs of the new state power where they did not exist, and to recruit new volunteers for the partisan ranks.(30) According to the plan of the operational staff, the operation covered the region of Ferizaj, too. The Macedonian detachments there tried to exploit the struggle against reaction as a pretext to intensify the campaign of open terror. The violence assumed the most hideous forms, including the killing of children and pregnant women, executions without trials, and the raping of women and girls. In this situation, the revolt spread to other parts, too. On December 20, the population in Gjilan attacked the detachments of the 8th and 17th Macedonian Brigades and captured the town on the 23rd. The Yugoslav propaganda seized on these outbreaks as an opportunity to step up its anti-Albanian campaign, while, during their attempts to put them down, the Yugoslav detachments shot people and burned houses indiscriminately.

After the departure of the ANLA formations to the north of Yugoslavia in pursuit of the nazi troops, the popular revolt under leading Shaban Polluzha spread widely especially in the region of Drenica. Some local partisan units joined the people. The revolt began when the



Supreme Staff of the YNLA and the Main Staff of Serbia ordered some of the Kosova brigades to march to the north. To implement this order, the 7th Brigade, which included volunteers from Drenica, had been concentrated in Podujeva. At this time arrived reports of the massacres by the Yugoslav detachments in Drenica along with information that the families of fighters in the partisan detachments had been among them.

In these circumstances, the partisans from Drenica received the approval of the operational staff of Kosova to send a commission to their region to verify the situation on the spot. The observations of the commission were blood-curdling, since the traces of crimes could be seen everywhere. In the Klina River, the population showed the commission the bodies of 250 men of Skenderaj (today Serbica) hacked to death with axes, without limbs, without noses, without ears, their eyes torn out, bound together with wire in groups of six or seven or eight.(31) The commission presented its findings to the staffs of Yugoslav detachments. Instead of taking measures to correct the problem, however, the Yugoslav detachments opened fire and liquidated the commission, too.(32) Immediately after this, volunteers from Drenica broke through the encirclement by the Yugoslav forces at Podujeva and returned to Drenica, which, for the next two months became the arena of bloody fighting. To suppress the revolt, the Supreme Staff of the YNLA dispatched fresh troops urgently to Kosova and brought into use the artillery detachments. In order to take revenge and quell the revolt, the massacres of innocent people and the burning of villages was stepped up. The masses of the population sought refuge in the mountains and forests. The revolt broke out also in the region of Mitrovica where, in January 1945, the 25th Brigade of the Yugoslav 46th Division, guarding the Trepçe mine, was attacked. After crushing the revolt in these regions, the Yugoslav turned their attention to the zone of Drenica.

\*

\*

\*

February 1945 brought changes and new developments. On February 8, under the hoax of fighting the Albanian reaction, and crushing "counter-revolutionary forces", a military administration was established in Kosova by the leadership. (40) The time at which it was set up coincides with the time when the top organs of the CPY decided that Kosova as an autonomous unit should be annexed to the Republic of Serbia. This coincidence is not fortuitous, but is part of the tasks the military government faced.

The military administration over the Albanian population repudiated the achievements and rights people had won during the war, imposed on it the solutions that had been worked out for the federal arrangements of the post-war Yugoslavia, and organized and co-ordinated more effectively the attack on Albanians. To this end, numerous detachments concentrated all their activity to these ends and directed the punitive mopping up operations. This administration tried to crush the revolt of the Albanian population in Drenica and to stop the outburst of the Albanians' discontent in the future, at all costs. It had under its command all the troops operating in Kosova, as well as the new detachments from other parts of Yugoslavia, especially after the dispatch of Kosova units to the north. With the establishment of this administration, changes were made in the command and the organization of the military units deployed there. Kosova was proclaimed a "military zone" and its command attached directly to the Supreme Staff of Yugoslavia. Colonel Savo Derlevic, from the 1st Army of the YNLA, was put at the head of the Zone Command and the Operational Staff. The zone command of Kosova and its subordinate sections were staffed with Serbian and Montenegrin officers who, in many cases,



came from other parts of Yugoslavia. The detachments received the support of special cavalry, signals, motorized engineering, artillery and other units. In March 1945, the Operational Group and seven divisions, the 52nd, 46th, 41st, 50th, 24th and 26th, with about 20 brigades were deployed in the area. The province was divided into five military zones with centres in Prishtina, Prizren, Peja, Ferizaj and Mitrovica, and into 21 local commands. Attached to the zone commands and local commands were permanent military detachments and detachments of OZNA, assisted by the forces stationed all over Kosova.

The authorities changed the regional forums and the local organs of power, especially in the regions previously traversed by the detachments of the ANLA. In every zone, too, elements from the ranks of the Serbian and Montenegrin populations dominated. As a result of sectarianism and distrust in the Albanian population, there were few Albanian cadres or communists, and the unrestrained anti-Albanian propaganda placed them in a position of complete inferiority. In March 1945, in Kosova's 141 party organizations with 1 020 communists, only 328 or 33 per cent were Albanians. (34) During the days of the military establishment, the campaign of terror went on in the same proportions as before. It focussed on removing the contingents of young people of Kosova who were sent to the north of Yugoslavia, initially for forming Kosova brigades and subsequently for Yugoslav units, or in the ranks of "labour brigades". The road which the Kosovar youth traversed was full of difficulties caused by the grave circumstances of the end of the war, shortages of food and the absence of elementary facilities of hygiene, and also by the activity of chauvinists and provocateurs in Yugoslav units and staffs. Thus, the columns of recruits from Kosova, unarmed and accompanied by soldiers of the 46th Yugoslav division, were compelled to march from Prizren to Tivar and treated more like columns of prisoners of war than volunteers going to fight against fascism. Their armed escorts mistreated them and associated the incidents with victims. In general, volunteers from Kosova in YNLA were supposed to come from the ranks of a "suspect" population and encountered a profoundly hostile attitude with tragic consequences. This happened to thousands of conscripts from Kosova who were sent as replacements to the 4th Yugoslav Army. Several hundred members of one of the columns marching from Prizren to Tivar got killed on the way, (35) while the 1 600 who survived this tragic march was shot in Tivar. (36)

The military administration took urgent measures to crush the revolt in Drenica with unrestrained terror. It turned into a real slaughter for the systematic and organized annihilation of the population whose only fault was that they were Albanians. Numerous witnesses and documents indicate that, during 1944-1948, about 40 000 persons were eliminated in the Albanian regions of Yugoslavia. (37)

\*

\*

\*

The military administration established immediately after the Second World War, was not an unknown form of oppression imposed on the Albanian population for the first time. It was imposed whenever the Serbian and Montenegrin troops occupied and reoccupied these regions. Thus, after the partitioning of the Albanian regions in 1913, the Supreme Command of the Serbian army ran the government through the military and police organs located there. (38) Likewise, in October 1918, the occupation of Kosova was followed by a Serbian military and police administration which continued until 1922-1923. (39) In all cases, this administration has aimed to suppress the Albanians' natural resistance for an unjust solution of the national



problem and to organize a campaign of terror against them. Its rule has always marked the victory of those political forces in Serbia which have thought that the Albanian regions can be governed only with an "iron fist". After the Second World War, these views had many supporters in the leadership of the CPY and the Yugoslav state. The military administration has always combined the administrative measures and the terror of the army and the police forces with intense propaganda to overwhelm the voice of the Albanian population in support of its just struggle and demands. An administration with the same form and content came into being also after the mass demonstrations of the spring of 1981 and the rallies and strikes of February and March 1989.



## NOTES

- 1 J.B.Tito, *The National Quesdtion in the Light of the National Liberation War*, in "Proleter", December 1942.
- 2 H.Bajrami, "*Bajram Curri*" *Partisan Detachment*, Prishtina 1985. Instructions of S.V.Tempo for the CC of the CPY of Kosova, October 2, 1943, p.211.
- 3 B.Petranovic - C.Strbac, *Istorija socijalisticke Jugoslavije*, doc.Belgrade 1977, p.20.
- 4 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o narodnaoslobodilackom ratu Jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom 1, knj.19 (Borbe na Kosovu 1941-1944), Belgrade 1969, doc.104.
- 5 *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o...*, doc.205.
- 6 V.Dedijer, *Novi prilozii za biografiju J.B.Tito*, vol.2, Rijeka 1981, p.1091, 1095.
- 7 H.Hoxha, *The Process of Self-determination of the Albanian Nationality During the Revolution and Socialist Construction*, "Kosova 2", Prishtina 1973, p.77.
- 8 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 16, 1988.
- 9 B.Petranovic-C.Strbac, *op.cit.*, p.75.
- 10 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 16, 1988. "The gathering for the Bujan Conference".
- 11 H.Hoxha, *op.cit.*, p.77.
- 12 *Borba*, April 8, 1945, p.2.
- 13 *Ibidem. Borba*, July 30, 1945, p.2.
- 14 *Outline of the History of the LCY*, Prishtina 1955, p.449.
- 15 *Osnivacki kongress KPS*, Belgrade 1972, pp.75-76.
- 16 *The People's Council of the SAR of Kosova and Metohija, (1943-1953)*, Prishtina 1955, p.20.
- 17 Before the War, in Croatia and Slovenia, the respective Communist Parties had been formed to lead the party organizations. During the War the CP of Macedonia was founded too. The party organizations of the other regions were led by provincial committees of the CPY. The Communist Party of Serbia was formed in May 1945.
- 18 D.Erakovic, *Kosova-Promised Land*, "Rilindja", Prishtina, July 26, 1989.
- 19 *Osnivacki kongres...*, p.39.
- 20 V.Dedijer, *op.cit.*, p.1140.
- 21 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, April 15, 1945.
- 22 In the summer of 1944, on the Island of Vis, talks began between the delegation of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Committee of Yugoslavia, headed by J.B.Tito, and the head of the royal government in exile, I.Subasic. On the basis of the agreement signed in August of that year, the King of Yugoslavia, Peter II Karageorg, decided to take the command of the royal troops in the homeland from D.Mihajlovic and to recognize J.S.Tito as the sole leader of the Yugoslav Army. Without entering into the analysis of the agreement, it must be pointed out that the representatives of the royal government became bannerbearers of Great-Serb chauvinism and were notorious for their stand against the Albanian population. After August 1944, some new divisions were created in Serbia, including some of the *cetnik* detachments which wanted to hide the crimes and aims of their movement under the cloak of the NL Army. The Main Headquarters of the NLA of Serbia ordered several of its divisions to march into Kosova.
- 23 A.Hadri, *The National Liberation Councils in Kosova*, Prishtina 1974, p.168.
- 24 OZNA (Odelenje za zastitu naroda, branch for the people's defence). At that time Spasoje Djakovic was charged with running the OZNA service in Kosova.
- 25 V.Dedijer, *op.cit.*, p.909.
- 26 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, April 15, 1945.
- 27 *Osnivacki kongres ...*, p.73.
- 28 *Central Archives of the Army of the PSRA (CAA)*, fund of the Command of the



Shkodra Region, 1942-1945, box 1, file 16, fasc. 3.

29 *Zbornik dokumenata...*, doc.290.

30 CAA, fund of the 5th Brigade, 1943-1944, box 1, file 7, fasc.140.

31 *Ibidem*.

32 CAA, fund of the Command of the Shkodra Region, 1942-1945, box.1, file 16, fasc.3.

33 According to Savo Derlevic, who was charged with running the military government in those parts, Tito had said to him that the counter-revolutionary forces in Kosova amount to 30 000, *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 16, 1988.

34 V.Georgevic, *Organizacioni i razvoj partije na Kosovu i Metohiji, 1945-1952*, in "The Working Class of Mitrovica and Its Environs in the Communist and Worker Movement...", Mitrovica 1979, p.562.

35 CAA, fund of the General Staff of the ANLA, 1945. Radiogram to the General Staff, April 2, 1945.

36 M.Piraku. *Ripushtimi jugosllav i Kosoves*. Prishtine 1992, f.132.

The events in Tivar have been dealt with several times by leaders and in articles in the Yugoslav press (see *Osnivacki kongres KPS...*, pp.157-158). Their version is adhered to by other scholars (See P.Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question*. New York 1968, p.104). According to him, the event was provoked by an unarmed Albanian who killed his escort. The decision of the leaders of the convoy to execute 40 Albanians in reprisals for the murder of a Serbian fighter was exploited by enemies amongst the Albanians to provoke a revolt, during which 300 Albanians died.

The relevant documents and witnesses to these events proved the opposite. According to a radiogram of April 3, 1945, sent from the Command of the Shkodra Region to the General Staff of the ANLA, at midnight, on April 1, 1945, during the passage of the columns of recruits from Kosova in the wharf of the Buna River, for unknown, perhaps accidental, reasons, a Yugoslav soldier and one of the recruits were drowned. The Yugoslav soldiers escorting the convoy, thinking that the crowning was done deliberately, opened fire on the unarmed conscripts who were waiting to cross the river. The escorts from the 2nd Battalion of the 27 Brigade of the 46 Division, commanded by Ciro Stikovic, killed and wounded more than 17 people (CCA, fund of the General Staff).

A radiogram of April 7 points out that, according to subsequent reports, this event had been provoked by the Yugoslavs. It says: "A weak ago, more than 7 000 Kosovars divided into three marching groups had crossed over to Montenegro. As soon as the second group of 3 000 men reached the shores of the sea near Tivar, it was surrounded by the Yugoslavs. The Slav elements were separated from it, and then fire was opened against the Albanians. We have received information from those who managed to escape by feigning death under the mass of corpses. About ten of them who escaped are in Shkodra." (CAA, fund of the General Staff, radiogram of April 7, 1945).

37 T.Zajmi. *Lidhja e dyte e Prizrenit*. Bruxelles, 1964, f.104.

38 *Mitrovica and Its Environs*, Mitrovica 1979, p.99.

39 L.Rushiti, *The Administrative-territorial Regulation of Kosova During 1918-1919*, in "Kosova", no.1, Prishtina 1972, p.249.



ZAMIR SHTYLLA  
Senior Scientific Researcher

## THE DEPORTATION OF ALBANIANS IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1950-1966)

The disintegration of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after the fascist occupation in April 1941 during the Second World War temporarily interrupted the policy of the forced deportation of the Albanians of Kosova and other parts to Turkey. However, the drafting of plans to recommence it after the war continued, when the state of Southern Slavs would be created again. Included in the efforts to draft other anti-Albanian platforms, which did not differ at all from those before 1941, were representatives of two Yugoslav political groups opposed to each other, the pro-fascist *çetnik* reaction and, astonishingly and regrettably, also, the national liberation movement. While the former reiterated its position in the first year of the occupation, the latter did at the end of the War.

The programme of *çetnik* reaction for the expulsion and assimilation of Albanians was drawn on December 20, 1941, under the signature of Draza Mihajlovic,<sup>(1)</sup> minister of war in the Yugoslav Government in exile, and commander-in-chief of the *çetnik* units which collaborated with the occupier against the Yugoslav National Liberation War. After pointing out the danger and concern the Albanians had caused for Serbia and Yugoslavia, the programme stressed that one of the main ways to eliminate them was to shift them to the interior of Serbia, while not ruling out, but on the contrary encouraging, their emigration to Turkey. The *çetnik* writers of this platform also underlined the necessity of combining the deportation with a simultaneous implementation of a policy under which the "Serbs from the districts of Studenica and old Kolashin should be brought into Kosova..., while Serbs from the mountainous *zhupas* and from Montenegrin clans, especially from Vasojevic..., and craftsmen from Serbia... should be brought into Metohija (Dukagjin Plateau - Z.Sh.)"<sup>(2)</sup>

The second programme in the form of a report is dated November 3, 1944, under the signature of Doc. Vasa Cubrilovic.<sup>(3)</sup> Entitled "The Problem of Minorities in the New Yugoslavia", it was drawn up urgently and sent to the leadership of the National Liberation Movement of Yugoslavia, where a limited group discussed it.<sup>(4)</sup> This proposal did not differ at all from the one he had advocated on March 7, 1937, in the "Serbian Club of Culture" in Belgrade. The only difference is in the increased number of the non-Slav population of Yugoslavia, towards which Cubrilovic wanted to apply the plans to shift them from where they lived. At this time, the former member of the Serbian Club of Culture was no longer addressing the royal Yugoslav Government but the top leadership of the National Liberation Movement in Yugoslavia.

The point of Cubrilovic's platform for the future of the state of Southern Slavs was Federal Yugoslavia, freed once and for all from the non-Slav minorities, especially the Albanians, Germans and Hungarians. He emphasized, "Democratic Federal Yugoslavia can be sure of peace and development only when it is ethnically pure and the question of minorities has been ended once and for all through their deportation."

Cubrilovic demanded that the top leadership of the National Liberation Movement of Yugoslavia should, at the proper moment and with the greatest caution and preoccupation, exploit the possibilities presented by the world war to totally remove the Albanians and other minorities from the Yugoslav state. In his view, wars were most suitable for the solution of this problem, because that which in peace time requires decades and centuries to carry out, in



wartime is accomplished within months or years.

According to Cubrilovic, the only way to wipe out the Albanians was to expel "hundreds of thousands of Albanians", and the main methods to force them to leave would be the open violence and terror of military detachments.

Along with deportation, Cubrilovic recommended speed and perfect organization in the systematic and planned colonization of the regions from which the Albanians would be sent away. For him, these regions had national, political, social and economic significance for the Yugoslav state. While demanding that the removal of the Albanians should be conducted by the army and organs of the national liberation councils, from the centre to the base, he devoted much attention to the instructions and directives to be issued specifically to the national liberation councils at the base about the way they should organize and follow up the deportation and colonization most effectively. "This question", he said, "is important and will have great values if Marshal Tito, as supreme commander of the National Liberation Army, while issuing directives to the army, were to issue as quickly as possible special directives to the national liberation councils on how they should act..."

Although they did not immediately mark the recommencement of the deportation of Albanians, the consequent events in Kosova and other regions and the attitude adopted towards the Albanian population there during and after November 1944 showed clearly that the advice Cubrilovic was giving the top leadership of the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement was being turned into a bloody and bitter reality.

Along with the massacres and terror imposed on the Albanians in a number of districts, and in Tetova, Gostivar, Shkup and elsewhere in the Republic of Macedonia, in 1945, the state took initial measures that later became a completely open and systematic policy in all the Albanian regions to deny Albanians their ethnic origin by calling them Turks and Macedonians, by encouraging the opening of schools in the Turkish language in the regions inhabited by Albanians where there was no Turkish population, by denying them the use of their mother tongue and national symbols, and so on.(5) The newspaper *Flaka e Vellazerimit*, published in Shkup, commented that the propaganda and pressure to artificially reduce the number of Albanians in Macedonia by defining them as Muslim, and likewise, to artificially increase the number of Turks was a chauvinist activity especially against the Albanians. This paper wrote: "Those who are damaged are the Albanians in Macedonia," because, as a result of this unjust policy, "the number of Albanians is reduced and the ranks of the Turks increased with non-Turks."(6) All these things were done to justify at the appropriate moment what was being projected for the recommencement of the forced emigration of Albanians, but which still could not be applied until the ambitions of the top leadership of the Yugoslav party and state to annex Albania and make it a seventh Republic of Yugoslavia had been accomplished.

However, the events of 1948 stripped the disguise from the secret Yugoslav plans both towards the People's Republic of Albania and towards the Albanians living on their ancestral lands in Yugoslavia. After this period, the ideas and proposals Vasa Cubrilovic had presented in November 1944 began to be practised towards the Albanians with the greatest ferocity. The elimination, imprisonment and murder of outstanding Albanian figures like Nexhat Agolli, Rifat Berisha, Xheladin Hana and many others in Kosova and elsewhere from the time of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War, went along with a savage all-sided oppression of the Albanian population of Yugoslavia.

Following the violence and terror against the Albanian population of Yugoslavia after 1948, Yugoslavia tried to create the most favourable circumstances and conditions to resume the expulsion of this group to Turkey. To this end, under the pretext of "consistent implementation" of the principle of full recognition of national rights for every population, Belgrade stepped up its propaganda for the opening of schools in the Turkish language in Kosova and other regions, just as it had done previously in the Albanian regions of Macedonia.



Its purpose was to produce in Kosova a Turkish nationality that had not existed before. The problem of the recognition of the Turkish nationality in Kosova had been raised in the early 1950s, speculating about a limited use of the Turkish language in a few urban centres such as Prizren, Prishtina, Mitrovica, Peja and one or two others. However, the use of the Turkish language, which as the official language in the Ottoman Empire had been imposed, did not in any way mean that those who spoke it were of Turkish nationality.(7) Only a small number of urban families wrote Turkish; the Albanians of the Roman Catholic faith, as well as the Serbs and Montenegrins of the Orthodox Church, knew this language, which did not in any way imply that they were Turks.

Before announcing official procedures for the recognition of the Turkish nationality in Kosova, in the early 1950s all the state organs launched feverish propaganda campaigns in villages, city quarters and work centres.(8) Top functionaries of the state, the CPY and mass organizations in Kosova, frequently assisted by delegates from the centre, asserted that "socialist" Yugoslavia would not hinder in any way persons of the Turkish nationality to go to the free Homeland, Turkey, at any time they "would request" permission. After the resounding propaganda and pressure, on March 20, 1951, Belgrade asked the Regional People's Council to vote on its recognition of the Turkish nationality and, on this basis also, on the "opening of schools in the Turkish language in the territory of the AR of Kosova-Metohija." (10) Fiercely opposing the Albanian delegates like Zekeria Rexha, who with facts exposed the anti-Albanian aims of the question, the political secretary of the Regional Committee of the CPY, Djoko Pajkovic, threatened Regional People's Council delegates and told them that they must approve the decision "through which the rights of the national minority of a number of citizens of Kosova and Metohija..., who considered themselves Turks, will be recognized..." (11) This Montenegrin spokesman of Belgrade, who held the topmost position in Kosova, made open allusions to the only alternative the ruling regime had prepared for the entire Albanian population in Yugoslavia by offering them, first, their denationalization through proclaiming them Turks and, immediately afterwards, deportation to Turkey.

This strong pressure forced the Regional Council to recognize the Turkish nationality in Kosova on March 20, 1951, while the decision about schools in the Turkish language was couched in a way which gave the Serbian functionaries a free hand to open the maximum number of schools in the region for teaching in Turkish and to compel the Albanian children to attend them. The first point of this decision stated: "In the zones of the autonomous region of Kosova-Metohija, schools will be opened for the Turkish national minority with teaching in the Turkish language in all the places where the need for this is seen." (12) The Yugoslav state organs would not restrict themselves to opening such schools only in those parts of Kosova where a total of 1 315 persons of Turkish nationality had been defined, but "in all the places where the need for this is seen" by those in power.

Gradually, the press and other channels of propaganda began publicizing the general achievements of the "Turkish nationality" in Kosova, while emphasizing the so-called spiritual, religious and other connections between the population of Kosova and the Turkish nation. In the radio broadcasts and the newspaper articles in that region, more and more was written with obvious tendentious aims to falsify the facts and historical events; it was to "prove" that the Albanians of Kosova did not differ in their mentality, attitudes and beliefs from the Turkish citizens of Turkey.(13)

The policy of emphasizing the Turkish element at all costs and, at the same time, artificially raising to unbelievable figures the size of the Turkish nationality at the expense of the Albanians was finalized in the second census taken in 1953. According to its figures, the inhabitants of Kosova of Turkish nationality amounted to 34 583, as compared with 1 315 in the 1948 census. This increase of 33 268 in no way could be justified as a natural one, but it was done only "to inflate in the maximum the number of people for emigration to Turkey." (14)



The 1953 census recorded 524 555 residents of the region with Albanian nationality, compared with 498 242 in 1948. The increase was 26 313, i.e. smaller than that of Turks and much lower than the real growth of the Albanian population which, from an approximate calculation for the five years between two censuses, should have been more than 75 000 or about 50 000 more than the census figures.

The manipulations of the size of Turkish nationals at the expense of Albanians in the 1953 census were even more obvious in Macedonia. The census tallied 162 524 inhabitants with Albanian nationality, or 34 865 fewer than those in 1940. Instead of increasing as a result of a normal demographic process, the Albanians had suddenly been reduced. Meanwhile, the Turkish nationals in Macedonia, like those in Kosova, had expanded at astonishing galloping rates. From 95 940 in 1948, which even then had been faked at the expense of the Albanians, in 1953 the Yugoslav officials counted 203 000 persons of Turkish nationality.

The same manipulations of the census that occurred in Kosova and Macedonia were observed in 1953 in other regions where Albanians lived. In Serbia, excluding the autonomous regions of Kosova and Vojvodina, in which the communes of Preseva, Bujanovc and Medvedja with Albanian populations were included, the Turks went up from 523 recorded in 1948 to 19 555, while in Montenegro, from a total of two, their number shot up to 292.

In the whole of Yugoslavia, the census of 1953 recorded 259 535 inhabitants of Turkish nationality, from a total of 97 954 in the census five years earlier. The increase was 161 581 inhabitants. Meanwhile the number of the Albanians stayed virtually the same from one census to the next. In 1948, it was 750 431, while in 1953 it were only 3 814 more, or a total of 754 245 in the whole of Yugoslavia. As to what had happened to the number of unrecorded Albanians, which according to approximate calculations must have been a minimum of 115 000, this is shown clearly by the extraordinarily large increase in the numbers of Turks "in social and political circumstances which especially favoured the orientation and declaration to be Turks..."(15) After the removal of Rankovic and his group in 1966, when the possibilities were created for the Albanians to investigate and examine the stand adopted towards them, the facts revealed some aspects of these special "social and political circumstances" which had been created through the activization of functionaries of organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who "have summoned hundreds and hundreds of Albanians to the UDB and have threatend them that they must declare themselves Turks."(16) These things were pointed out also at the 7th Plenum of the Regional Committee of LC of Kosova in October 1966, when it was publically admitted that during the census the Albanians "had been forced through pressure to become Turks."(17) The exercise of secret or open pressure during the censuses frequently created such unbelievable situations that, in a number of cases, after the census was taken in one family, "one brother was Albanian and the other Turkish, or the mother was Turkish and her daughter Albanian..."(18) The sole aim of these tactics in the early 1950s, and later was that by creating a nationality of hundreds of thousands of Turks in Yugoslavia, especially in the regions where the overwhelming majority of the population was Albanian, "efforts would be made to force them to emigrate to Turkey."(19) To achieve this final goal, precisely at the beginning of the 1950s and especially after the census of 1953 when the number of members of Turkish nationality in Yugoslavia had been artificially increased at the expense of Albanians from 97 000 to more than 250 000, the federal and republican state organs adopted special legal provisions "on the possibility of the permanent removal to Turkey of members of the Turkish ethnic group."(20) At the same time, the Yugoslav diplomacy stepped up its efforts to produce favourable international circumstances so that the removal of Yugoslav subjects with a "Turkish nationality" to Turkey would be completed in suitable conditions and without hindrance and would be done as quickly as possible.(21)

All these things show that the period of intensive preparation for the deportation of Albanians from Kosova to Turkey had given way to the exercise of mass terror so that hundreds of



thousands of Albanians would be forced to leave, as Vasa Cubrilovic had imagined in 1944.

The Yugoslav state organs began the mass deportation of the Albanians recorded as "Turks" in 1953 when, according to some reports, 13 000 persons were sent to Turkey, while, one year later, 17 000 more (24) went there. The increase to tens of thousands of deportees in the years 1953-1954 was exceptionally obvious in comparison with the first two or three years of the 1950s, when their number did not exceed a few hundred. It was due to the direct pressure and also due to a number of anti-Albanian economic measures taken after 1948. Some of these steps were the seizure of the lands of Albanian families described as "enemies" and their grants to Slav colonists, the deliberate confiscation and nationalization without criteria of the properties of Albanians under the pretext of their use for military, industrial or town-planning purposes, and the restriction or hindrance of the economic activity of some key branches of handicrafts associated with the traditions of Albanians.(23)

However, the forced deportation of Albanians to Turkey assumed unprecedented proportions after the so-called action for the recovery of weapons in the winter of 1955-1956. From the terror and massacres which went with it, this action can be likened to those for the collection of arms from the Albanians before 1941; in many ways it went far beyond them. Under this pretext, the Serbian authorities wanted to make the situation as insecure and tense as possible among the Albanian population, when they misused the right of the state to seize weapons. The decision to organize this large punitive operation was taken in the leading forums of the LCY, while its execution was entrusted to the organs of state security in the region of Kosova, directly under those of the Republic of Serbia.(24) As one of the chiefs of the LCY had to admit, the action for the collection of weapons had been taken to terrorize the Albanian population and to speed up their deportation to Turkey as much as possible, and it was "a premeditated attack against the Albanian population..."(25) After proclaiming Kosova "in a state of alarm", describing it as the most dangerous region in the Federation in which an uprising was allegedly being prepared,(26) large forces of the militia and the organs of the UDB started sealing off whole regions all at once or piece by piece. In these terrorist operations, "the members of the state security service and the militia service had a free hand in regard to the choice of methods and means in the settling of accounts with the innocent citizens."(27) Thousands of Albanians, imprisoned or placed under temporary arrest, were subjected to humiliation, curses, insults, and inhuman beatings with clubs. The agents of the UDB and the militiamen tortured persons of all ages by immersing them in water in winter and crippling them through continual torture. Many people died under or after torture, not to mention those who were crippled and remained invalids till the end of their lives. In scores of villages, especially in those communes where the population was entirely or overwhelmingly Albanian as in Suhareka, Drenica, Podujeva, Gjakova, Istog, Kaçanik, Vuçiterna and elsewhere, "there was almost no household in which one of the adult males had not been beaten..."(28) The operational groups, each composed of agents of the UDB and tens of militiamen, had received clear-cut orders that they should make searches on the basis of lists prepared before the so-called action for the collection of weapons was begun, in the houses of "dangerous" persons, and should torture as many Albanians as possible(29) to increase the pressure to speed up their removal to Turkey.

Up to the middle of February 1956, the punitive operation for weapons had included all the regions of Kosova, while on February 22, the republican secretary of internal affairs of Serbia, Vojin Lukic, ordered the organs of the UDB to extend it also to the peripheral regions in those communes where the population was made up of Slavs and Albanians, but defining clearly that it was directed "against citizens of the Albanian nationality."(30) As in the regions of Kosova where the operation was continuing with increasing brutality, the Albanians of the latter regions, too, suffered under the savagest methods of violence and means of torture which could be created only by the minds of the most brutal and unrestrained chauvinists.



The consequences of the so-called action for weapons were apparent in the days it was conducted, especially in the period that followed, in the huge increase in the number of Albanian families who were leaving or preparing to leave. A document of the LCY stated some years later: "The action for the collection of weapons has caused a mass demand from people to emigrate to Turkey..."(31) While the number of deportees from Kosova to Turkey in 1954 was 17 000, one year later, when the action for weapons commenced, this figure increased three fold, to 51 000 persons. In 1956, a further 54 000 were added, while, in 1957, the figure of the Albanians forced to emigrate swelled by another 57 000 new emigrants.(32) Thus, in just three years, at the moment of the culmination of pressure on the Albanians, the emigration assumed unprecedented dimensions, previously unimaginable even for those who worked out the platform of the elimination of Albanians from Kosova. The number of deportees in the years 1955-1957 reached to more than 160 000, or over 5 times more than in the years 1953-1954. This shows clearly the special role the government circles of Belgrade had allocated to the so-called action for the seizure of weapons. Just as during the years 1918-1941, before the departure for Turkey, the bulk of the Albanians stayed temporarily in transit in Macedonia, where the Yugoslav state completed the final formalities for changing the citizenship of the emigrants. The Macedonian central press continually published lists of the heads of Albanian families whose citizenship was changed from Yugoslav to Turkish. Thus, in January 1956, *Nova Makedonija* reported that 976 Albanian families had altered their citizenship on the occasion of their emigration to Turkey, while, one year later, in January 1957, this same newspaper published the names of 2 000 heads of Albanian families which had also changed their citizenship because they were emigrating to Turkey.

Even after the punitive operation for the seizure weapons, the pressure on the Albanian population to accelerate its emigration to Turkey continued relentlessly. As before, the main task in this organized anti-Albanian activity, especially in Kosova, was entrusted to the organs of the UDB, which had recruited to its ranks the most degraded elements of Yugoslav society, including ordinary criminals. (33) The officers and members of the state security and the militia operating in Kosova and other Albanian regions, who attended specific schools and courses, had special materials and textbooks which implanted chauvinism and the hatred towards all Albanians without distinction in them.(34) Thus, the composition and training of the forces of the organs of internal affairs legalized any kind of chauvinist and anti-Albanian attitude or action of theirs, which from the 1950s to the first half of the 1960s had been oriented mainly to speeding up the forced Albanian emigration to Turkey. Delineating this activity of the officials and agents of the UDB, the Albanian refugees stated that they had taken such a step because, after many tortures and hardships, "they were no longer able to withstand the pressure the officials of the state security service had exerted on them" to compel them to emigrate to Turkey.(35)

The final object of the anti-Albanian organs of the UDB and, in general, the whole Yugoslav state policy for the acceleration and continuation of emigration from Kosova and other regions was that no Albanians or as few as possible should stay in these regions, so that the ethnic ratio would shift radically in favour of the Slav population.(36)

Although at lesser intensity than after the action for the collection of weapons up to the end of the 1950s, in the first half of the 1960s, too, the emigration of tens of thousands of Albanians to Turkey went on.

The true number of Albanians has never been made known publicly for the simple reason that in itself the implementation of forced emigration was a meaningful testimony of the falsity and the demagogy of Belgrade about its so-called just national policy and the equality of Albanians with other nations in Yugoslavia.

Nevertheless, various sources and approximate estimates of the demographic process in Kosova and other Albanian regions show that the number of emigrants was exceptionally large



and amounted to hundreds of thousands of people, considerably exceeding not only that of Albanians deported to Turkey during the years 1918-1941, but even the total for the whole period from 1912 to 1941. Prominent scholars of social-demographic trends in the Albanian regions have suggested that just in the years 1953-1960 up to 283 000 people (37) had emigrated, while for the whole period 1950-1966 the approximate number of Albanians deported to Turkey was more than 400 000.(38)

The policy of the forced emigration of Albanians to Turkey in the second half of the 1960s, in the political circumstances created in Yugoslavia after the removal from the party and state leadership of the corrupt figure of Rankovic, ceased in general. But it was replaced by a more sophisticated policy of attacks on that ethnic group. After 1966, and in the 1970s and 1980s, the so-called economic emigration assumed a large proportion inside and outside the Federation and, along with this but to a lesser extent, also emigration from Yugoslavia for political reasons.

This forced departure of Albanians from their birthplace was due to artificially created economic factors and a continuous pursuit of a deliberate anti-Albanian policy which is not in any way different from that pursued in the earlier periods.



## NOTES

- 1 M.Krasniqi, *Savremene drustveno-geografske promene na Kosovu i Metohiji*, Prishtina 1963, p.34.
- 2 M.Krasniqi, *Saveremene...*, p.34.
- 3 AIH, A-VIII-561, V.Cubrilovic, "The Problem of Minorities in the New Yugoslavia".
- 4 H.Bajrami, *Resolutely Against the Mistreatment of Ntionalities*, "Rilindja", Prishtina, March 12, 1985; Vasa Cubrilovic drew up and presented his report only a short time before he was appointed to the pst of Minister of Agriculture and Forests in the new Yugoslav Government, hence he was at that time and remained afterwards a personality known and valued by the leadership of the CPY.
- 5 *Flaka e Vellazerimit*, Shkup, April 4, 1945, November 23, 1945, January 3, 1946.
- 6 *Ibidem*, December 27, 1945.
- 7 F.Agani, *The Census of the Population and Some Discussion of It*, in "Perparimi", Prishtina 1971, no.7, p.538.
- 8 *Zeri i popullit*, November 27, 1952.
- 9 *Ibidem*, July 17, 1953.
- 10 *The People's Council of the Autonomous Region of Kosova and Metohija*, Prishtina 1955, pp.564-565.
- 11 *Ibidem*, p.565.
- 12 *Ibidem*, p.568.
- 13 *Zeri i popullit*, December 8, 1951.
- 14 A.Pushka, *The Change of the National Structure of the Population of Kosova and the Immigration in the 70 years of this Century*, in "Perparimi", Prishtina 1971, no.10, p.839.
- 15 F.Agani, *The Census and ...*, in "Perparimi", no.7, 1971, p.538.
- 16 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, October 13, 1966, p.4.
- 17 *Ibidem*, p.3.
- 18 *Rilindja*, October 14, 1966, p.3.
- 19 E.Haskuka, *The Historical-Geographic Periods of the Commune of Prizren*, in "Albanological Investigations", series of Folklore and Ethnology, no.6, Prishtina 1978, pp.58-59.
- 20 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, April 28, 1983, p.7, May 11, 1983, p.10.
- 21 *Zeri i popullit*, August 16, 1952, June 19, 1954.
- 22 A.Pushka, *The Change of the National Structure...*, in "Perparimi", Prishtina 1971, no.10, p.856.
- 23 Q.Lleshi, *The Towns of Kosova*, Prishtina 1977, pp.15, 145-146, 147.
- 24 Contributions in the 7th Plenum of the Regional Committee of the LC of Kosova and Metohija, "Rilindja", October 16, 1966. In the organs of state security in Kosova, 87 per cent of the personnel in the most important places were Serbs or Montenegrins, while the few Albanians occupied "places of secondary importance" (See *Report of the state commission of the Regional Executive Council*, in "Rilindja", Dec.11, 1966, p.6).
- 25 Contribution of Dusan Petrovic, member of the Presidium of the CC of the LCY at the 7th Plenum of the Regional Committee of the LC of Kosova and Metohija, in "Rilindja", October 14, 1966, p.2.
- 26 Contributions in the 6th Plenum of the CC of the LC of Serbia, in "Rilindja", September 16, 1966, p.3.
- 27 Report of the State Commission of the Executive Council of the Regional Assembly, in "Rilindja", November 14, 1966, p.2.
- 28 *Ibidem*.



- 29 *Rilindja*, September 21, 1966, p.4, February 29, 1968, p.6, March 6, 1968, p.6.
- 30 Report of the State Commission of the Executive Council of the Regional Assembly, in "*Rilindja*", November 14, 1966, p.2.
- 31 The 7th Plenum of the Regional Committee of the LC of Kosova and Metohija, in "*Rilindja*", October 16, 1966, p.3.
- 32 A.Pushka, *The Change in the National Structure...*, "Perparimi", Prishtina 1971, no.10, p.856.
- 33 *Rilindja*, August 5, 1966, pp.1-2, December 5-7, 1967, pp.3-4.
- 34 The 6th Plenum of the CC of the LC of Serbia, in "*Rilindja*", September 15, 1966, p.4.
- 35 Report of the Commission on the measures in the state security service in Macedonia, in "*Rilindja*", December 7, 1966, p.5.
- 36 The 6th Plenum of the CC of the LC of Serbia, in "*Rilindja*", October 13, 1966, p.4.
- 37 A.Pushka, *The Change in the National Structure ...*, in "Perparimi", Prishtina 1971, no.10, p.856; M.Krasniqi in the monograph *The Contemporary Socio-geographic Changes in Kosova and Metohija* (Savremene dustveno geografske promene na Kosovi i Metohiji), Prishtina 1963, p.213, says that in the five years 1953-1957 alone the number of forced emigrants from Yugoslavia 195 000 persons. The overwhelming majority of them were deported after 1955 and were almost entirely from Kosova and Macedonia; Hivzi Islami points out that, in the years 1955-1958, about 160 000 Albanians called "Turks", because "only the so declared were accepted by the Turkish government" emigrated from Macedonia to Turkey (See H.Islami, *The Distribution and Number of Albanians*, in "Albanological Investigations", the series of Folklore and Ethnology, Prishtina 1976, no.6, p.23).
- 38 U.Hoti, *Problems and Terminology*, in "Perparimi" Prishtina 1976, no.5, p.520; P.Nushi, *The Characteristics of the Migration of Members of the Albanian Nationality in Yugoslavia and the Main Dimensions of the Process of Their Integration in the Countries in Which They Have Migrated*, in "Jehona", Shkup 1977, nos.9, 10, pp.1100-1101.



## ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF KOSOVA (1980-1989)

The tense political situation in Kosova today has its source both in the national discrimination against Albanians and in the exploitation of its economy and people by the more developed republics of Yugoslavia.

Kosova is rich in assets, with numerous minerals, fertile soil for agriculture, and an active industrious people. Nevertheless, this and the other regions with Albanian populations in Macedonia, Montenegro and other parts of Serbia are the most backward in Yugoslavia. This backwardness is the result of the policy of discrimination still being pursued there.

Kosova's minerals are especially important. The reserves of lignite coal discovered to date amount to 12 000 million tons and comprise 68.8 per cent of the total in Yugoslavia. In this province lie 30 per cent of Yugoslavia's reserves of energy, 22.3 per cent of its nickel, 52 per cent of its lead and zinc, and 51.8 per cent of its magnesite. Besides these, there are great quantities of chromite, silver, bauxite, manganese, iron, antimony, mercury, copper and tin. There are also rare minerals like cobalt, indium, cadmium, germanium not to mention the metaloids of which up to now 20 types of industrial value are known.(1)

Although Kosova has a mineral and energy wealth which comprises 10 per cent of all the natural assets of Yugoslavia (although its area is only 4.2 of the total) and consequently has very favourable conditions for industry and agriculture, it continues to be the most backward in Yugoslavia.

Kosova does not have a complex multi-branch economy, although it has all the possibilities for it. Despite the increase in the weight of industry which in 1984 turned out 37.4 per cent of the social product,(2) the mining industry, energy production and the initial processing of the raw materials occupy the main place in its economy. These branches, noted for their low level of accumulation and small absorption of work power, provide 2/3 of the industrial production of the province. Indeed, the energy industry, alone, produces 27 per cent of it.(3) If we add the considerable weight of the textile industry - today it turns out 13 per cent of the industrial production of the province - then we can form a more precise idea of the lop-sided development of the economy of Kosova and its unfavourable structure.(4) The branches of the processing industry, which ensure adequate profits and employment represent only 19.7 per cent of the social product of industry in Kosova, while in Yugoslav industry as a whole these branches turn out about 40 per cent of the social product. (5)

So, Kosova is mainly a source to supply other parts of Yugoslavia with unprocessed or semi-processed raw materials, electric power and cheap labour. At the same time it is a profitable market for the sale of finished industrial products from the more developed republics.

The biggest industrial enterprises in Kosova are the Trepçe mining-metallurgical-chemical combine in Mitrovica, the Kosova mining-electric-chemical combine in Obiliq and the iron-nickel metallurgical plant in Glagovc. The Trepça combine, with its lead and zinc mines and its smelting and refining plants, is the biggest producer of these metals in Yugoslavia and one of the important ones in Europe and the world. Its mines in Kosova have long been exploited intensively. In 1977, about 1.9 million tons of ore was extracted from them, and it is likely that in the eighties the forecast for increasing production to 2.5 million tons per year has been exceeded.(6) However, capacities for processing the metals in Trepçe, set up mainly in the



last 10-15 years, are still inadequate.

The "Kosova" combine, with its open-cast coal mines and thermo-power stations, is also a giant of its kind in Yugoslavia. It regularly produces 7 to 8 million tons of coal per years. Its thermo-power stations, with an installed capacity of 1 480 mW, are capable of producing up to 8 billion kWh of electric power per year.(7) According to the Kosova press, however, production of electric power in 1984-1985 amounted to only about 3.5 million kWh per year.

The group of large enterprises for raw materials also includes the plant for the smelting of iron-nickel ore at Glogovac. All these sources of minerals and power are not used for the benefit of the economy of Kosova, but to fulfil the needs of industry of other regions of Yugoslavia. Kosova has to supply them with electric power when it could use it for its own processing industry. Of Kosova's total electric power, more than 2/3 goes outside the province. That is how it comes about that, although Kosova is a large producer of electric power, it consumes per each family much less energy than the other republics and below the average of Yugoslavia. In 1980, Kosova's consumption was 2.6 times lower than the average for Yugoslavia, and four times lower than the annual average for Slovenia. The countryside in Kosova, still not completely electrified, suffers from a shortage of power.

Apart from non-ferrous metals and the electric energy, a considerable part of the coal and gas also goes outside the province. One of their main consumers is the metallurgical plant of Shkup in Macedonia, to which Kosova supplies each year more than 1 billion kWh and large quantities of coal and gas. More than 1 billion kWh of power, some of the ores, and the refined lead, zinc, silver and gold of Trepça and the gas and coal go to Serbia and the remainder to the other republics.

The mines of Trepça and other areas, the keys to the economy of Kosova, are kept rigorously under the control of Belgrade. Its institutions have concentrated all the studies and analyses on their development and exploitation, especially the composition of the ores. After the strikes of March 1989, the leadership of the Republic of Serbia replaced Albanians with Serbs in influential posts in this and many other enterprises.

The backwardness and unfavourable economic structure in Kosova are not due only to a situation inherited from the past, as Belgrade claims. Their main cause is the policy based on the interests of big capital of the developed republics of Yugoslavia, which makes investments in sectors not advantageous to Kosova. As Kosova press admits, the province meets more the needs of the industrially developed republics than those of its own, failing to cope with problems such as the employment of its able-bodied population and the accumulation of capital. Such a policy resembles to that of the more developed capitalist states towards dependent countries and colonies.

The consequences of this policy of economic discrimination are noticeable in the social services and income per capita, which in Kosova are the lowest. In 1947, they were about 49 per cent of the average of the country, while 40 years later, in 1987, they had sunk further to about 26 per cent of the average for Yugoslavia. Thus, from a level of the social services and income per capita, half the Yugoslav average in the immediate postwar period, in recent years Kosova has fallen to one quarter. During the same forty-year period, the province, which in the first post-war years had a similar level as Macedonia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina, has dropped to a 2.5 times lower level compared with these republics. In comparison with the more developed republic of Slovenia, however, the difference is even greater, 3.3 times lower in 1947 and 7.5 times lower today.(8) The official promises over the last 15 years about measures to stop this trend by increasing the production in the province at an annual rate 60 per cent higher than that of Yugoslavia as a whole have remained a dead letter. On the contrary, the rate has fallen to 50 per cent lower than this average. Hence, the trend in the Kosova economy is running opposite to the forecast made. Consequently, it is lagging ever more behind the economies of the Yugoslav republics and the autonomous province of Vojvodina.



This backwardness is by no means a consequence of "the high growth rate", or "demographic explosion", which according to Kosta Mihajlovic and Milos Macura "The Economic Development of Kosova" and "The Problem of Birth-rate in Kosova", have allegedly exerted a "decisive influence". The authors of the writings demand "vigorous social interventions", so as to ensure "essential changes in the birth-rate tendencies." (9) The Yugoslav statistics and the studies by Kosova experts prove the opposite. They show that even if Kosova had had the same increase in population as the Yugoslav average, under a policy of economic discrimination, its backwardness could not have been eliminated. (10)

The decisive factor for this backwardness is the policy of investments to exploit its economy. The basic branches have always absorbed the main investment funds, and these have never been sufficient. (11) Up to the second half of the fifties, there were virtually no investments in the Kosova economy, while, later, the system of credits was used instead of financing from the budget. Up to the mid-sixties, Kosova built only 8 per cent of its economic projects with means it was not obliged to repay, while in the other parts of the country 27 per cent of them were built with such means. (12) Despite forecasts, the funds allocated for investments in Kosova are never invested in full. Of the 94 billion dinars marked for investments in the five-year period 1975-1980, only 51 billion 220 million dinars, or 56 per cent of the total, were invested. A sum of 43 billion was transferred to the next five-year period, 1981-1985. But even those investments were used in the branches which ensured raw materials for Yugoslav industry or for export.

The structure of the distribution of investments has remained unchanged. Even after 1981, when Kosova was recognized as the most undeveloped region of Yugoslavia, and more promises of investments in the profitable branches of the processing industry were made, the situation hardly changed. In the five-year period 1981-1985, the funds Kosova received were not only much less than those promised, but even 16 per cent less than it got in the previous five-year period. For that five-year period, Kosova was promised 136 billion dinars, which, because of the devaluation of the dinar, was subsequently increased to 170 billion. During this five-year period, too, the economic organizations of the province covered with their own resources only 9.1 per cent of the investments, or 13 billion 95 million dinars. The remainder would be covered with the help of the Federation and credits from Yugoslav and foreign banks. Despite the promises, during the years 1981-1985, also, only 58 per cent of the investments from the Federal fund were made. The policy of carrying out investments through "the combination of labour and means" between Kosova enterprises and those from other regions of the Federation is not yielding results for its "accelerated development". Once again, about 90 per cent of the sum invested in the years 1981-1985 went for electric power, non-ferrous metallurgy, the ferro-nickel metallurgy and the "Iber" and "Radonic" hydro systems. Likewise, during 1986-1987, of the money invested in Yugoslavia, not more than 2.9 per cent was invested in the province. (13) Some of the funds which are supposed to have been spent for increasing processing capacities, have to do only with the setting up of branches of industry which secure all or most of their raw materials from imports, while their products are destined for the internal market. (14) In recent years the part of investments, especially those from the Republic of Serbia are spent to build industrial capacities in "ethnically pure" Serbian settlements where employment of Albanians is prohibited. The efforts to prevent the exodus of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova (15) are cited in justification of investments of this type. For the same purpose, one quarter of the jobs in any economic project in Kosova is reserved for Serbs and Montenegrins, if they agree to return there. (16)

Over 90 per cent of the long-term credits for Kosova are made up of sources other than its own and mainly of the means of the Federal Fund or foreign capital. Kosova is obliged to repay them at high rates of interest. These factors, as well as the permanent orientation of investments mainly to unfavourable branches producing raw materials are the basic cause of the



very low level of accumulation in Kosova. During the period 1970-1988, the economy of Kosova was able to cover only 5-10 per cent of investments with its own financial sources, a figure very much lower than the Yugoslav average. In this way, this economy has been placed in a situation in which it completely depends either on Serbia or on the Federation and is immersed in debts. Kosova's low capacity for accumulation is explained with the fact that the various means of the Federation are used for the exploitation of its economy, and not with the low level of production and productivity of the economy of Kosova, as is claimed in Yugoslavia. In fact, the Federation does not compensate the financial means provided for the development of the economy of Kosova. If the income from the economy of the province is analysed, it turns out that the Federation is exploiting its financial resources. In 1980, three enterprises alone, Trepça, Agrokosova and Electroekonomija of Kosova earned 35.7 thousand million dinars in income, while the total annual investments in the province amounted to 10-11 thousand million dinars.(17)

Kosova's indebtedness today is estimated at about three times the average of Yugoslavia. For each one hundred dinars invested, it must set aside 97 for the repayment of debts and 1/3 of this amount is simply for interest.(18) This grave situation calls for ever new credits. An ever greater proportion of these is used not to develop the economy, but to cover its increasing losses which are the result of the inter-action of many factors. These factors include the unsuitable structure of the industry and its dependence on investments from others and the delays in the financing and building of projects, which lead to increases in the estimated expenditure. The delays in commissioning projects during 1986 increased their cost by 43 per cent.(19)

Kosova and its people are exploited not only by the Yugoslav republics. The other creditor states are also among its exploiters. Kosova's debt to Western firms is part of the Yugoslav debt, which during recent years has not been less than 20 000 million dollars. In annual interest alone, Yugoslavia pays 1 700 million dollars. Kosova's debt to foreign creditors today comprises nearly half the debt of its economy and amounts to 1 196.8 million dollars. Of this debt, 324 million dollars are for interest alone.(20) During 1987, Kosova was unable to pay 100 million dollars on time because its foreign currency income did not cover more than 50 per cent of the liabilities of that year.(21) In 1988, however, the province had to repay a further 260 million dollars.(22) This is a stranglehold on the economy of Kosova.

The price policy, established by the centre for the main products of Kosova, is another heavy burden. The electric power, coal, and non-ferrous metals are taken from the Province at fixed prices, below those of the world market. Meanwhile, prices for consumer goods from the other republics rise continually. Such a policy is a blatant discrimination against the province. Disagreements between Kosova and Macedonia over the latter getting electric power at a very low price, below the Yugoslav level,(24) are well known. This price policy, which entails great losses for Kosova, is one of the factors in the very low accumulation of capital.

The price policy pursued by the Federation and the republics towards Kosova causes huge losses to the Kosova enterprises and leads to an unfair redistribution of a large part of the income created through the toil of Kosova workers, all to the advantage of various Yugoslav republics. To this day, 51 per cent of the products of Kosova are sold at controlled prices, so the disparity is becoming more marked despite some tentative adjustments. Actually during 1988, prices for industrial products in Yugoslavia rose 50 per cent more rapidly than those in Kosova, whereas the main products of this province such as lead, zinc, silver and ferro-nickel, were sold at prices lower than those of the world market.(25)

The economy of Kosova always suffers losses. During 1987 alone, 169 enterprises, or 22 per cent of the enterprises of the province, ended with losses totalling 136 500 million dinars. These enterprises employ 65 270 workers, or 39 per cent of the total in the economy. These losses were 4.2 times greater than those of 1986.(26)



The commercial firms of other parts of Yugoslavia also exploit Kosova and control its market. According to the Kosova press, about 200 such firms have their representatives and about 600 commercial units in Kosova. In Prishtina alone, more than 175 commercial organizations, units, warehouses and shops from the republics outside Kosova operated in 1985. Their aim is to "harvest" as much money as they can and as quickly as possible send it out of the province. Taking advantage of the lack of taxes, the Yugoslav commercial firms are in fierce competition with the local firms, thereby creating stocks of unsold goods in some branches of Kosova's weak processing industry. A typical case is that of some enterprises in the food-processing industry, which for lack of markets have been forced to work at half and sometimes less than a quarter of their capacity. The Yugoslav commercial firms have also monopolized much of Kosova's external market. Playing the role of intermediary for many Kosova export goods, they not only secure the lion's share of the profit, but frequently keep the hard currency for themselves, while settling their accounts with the Kosova producers in the weak dinar. It seems paradoxical but it is true that in recent years, Kosova has managed through strenuous efforts to have a more positive export balance than the average for Yugoslavia, while its import balance is the other way round. Trepça is the main exporter from Kosova and one of the five biggest in Yugoslavia. In 1983, Trepça secured 103 million dollars from its exports, while in 1984 this figure increased to 145 million dollars. For each dollar spent on import Trepça earned 2.57 dollars in export.

Agriculture is the most backward sector of the economy of Kosova. It is in a grave crisis. Its production has continually declined. Although about half the population of Kosova is engaged in agriculture, today it accounts for only 21.3 per cent of the overall national output.(27) The agriculture of Kosova is characterized by fragmentation of property. At the end of the seventies, the number of individual plots amounted to 1,840,000; in the mid-eighties this number was even higher. The Yugoslav banks advanced credits (at high rates of interest, of course) for setting up "minifarms" for farming and livestock, to buy land, tractors and livestock, but prices for agricultural products in general are unfavourable to the farmer.(28) The buying of land has been made difficult for the Albanian farmer; indeed, it has been prohibited when the seller is a Serb or Montenegrin. If this rule is broken, the question is politicized and labelled as an attempt of the great-Albanian chauvinists to create an "ethnically pure" Kosova, and it could end up with unpleasant consequences for the Albanian buyers.

The grain, which occupies about 97 per cent of the land for field crops, holds the main place in the agriculture of Kosova. Maize and wheat are the predominant crops and are planted in about equal acreage. During the seventies and the early eighties their yields were much below the Yugoslav average, especially maize, which averages 20 quintals per ha. The other crops, too, in general, had low yields, two to three times below the corresponding Yugoslav averages.(29) Livestock-farming also has very low productivity. The livestock, especially cows, are of poor breed.

This state of agriculture is the result of neglect over many years. The irrigation system and the farm machinery are always insufficient and unequally distributed. After many delays, the completion of part of the work on the construction of the "Iber" and "Radovic" hydro-systems has still not improved the situation of agriculture, because actually less than 40 000 ha of land can be watered. The farmers are unable to pay the high charges for irrigation water.(30) They also find it difficult to pay for fertilizers and other chemicals. The existing farm machinery is not utilized properly. Kosova has fewer agricultural cadres than the rest of Yugoslavia.

The indifference of the Yugoslav authorities in agriculture is leading to its deterioration. Each year an average of 10 000 - 20 000 hectares is left untilled.(31) For a long time, half rural families have had members temporary or permanent emigrants abroad. Although it has a very fertile land, good traditions of agriculture, and industrious farmers, the profound crisis of agriculture has forced Kosova to import about 40 per cent of the food it needs.



This state of agriculture has placed the light industry, especially the food-stuffs, in a difficult position. In the seventies, Kosova did not have the necessary capacities to mill grain, and it had to spend money to repurchase its grain turned into flour or other products in the neighbouring republics. Today, the food industry is working under capacity because of lack of raw materials (some of them are imports) and the competition of other Yugoslav firms which have saturated the Kosova market. The farm products cannot be sold on the foreign market, either. In 1987 the food-stuffs industry secured on the foreign market only 2.5 million dollars instead of the estimated 12 million.(32)

Even more backward than Kosova are the regions with Albanian populations in Macedonia, Montenegro and other parts of Yugoslavia. The communes of Tetova, Dibra, Gostivar, Kumanova, Presheva, Ulqin are markedly backward, and the press of Kosova and Macedonia and other republics has published articles about it. The investments there have been made in a proportion even smaller than in Kosova. Here, too, a policy similar to that in Kosova in the distribution of investments is followed. The leading circles of those republics exploit the energy resources and other raw materials of the regions. The electric-power from the "Spile" hydro-power station in Dibra makes up 1/3 of the total in Macedonia, although in this and other communes with Albanian population many villages are without power. A deliberate policy of discrimination in the economic treatment of the Albanian nationality has brought about that the workers and the engineering-technical staff of the industrial projects in the communes of Tetova, Dibra, Gostivar and elsewhere are mainly Macedonians. In the Montenegrin regions with an Albanian population such as Ulqin, Tivar, Tuz, Kraja, Gucia, to this day it is difficult to find any factory or industry. In the commune of Ulqin, extensive areas of land are left unimproved or untilled, while thousands of people from Ulqin are leaving their homes and emigrating to the USA.

Unemployment and emigration are serious problems for Kosova and other regions with Albanian population in Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia (without counting the provinces). According to official statistics, about 52 per cent of the total population, i.e. more than 900 000 persons, in Kosova are capable of work. Up to the end of 1988 the "self-administrative" sector provided jobs for about 240 000 persons; about 3/4 of them were engaged in the economic sphere, and the remainder in state administration, social organizations and education and culture. The rate of employment of the population of Kosova is the lowest in Yugoslavia. In 1988, those employed in Yugoslavia made up 28.3 per cent of the population or 1 in each 3.5 inhabitants, in Slovenia 43.1 per cent of the population or 1 in each 2.3 inhabitants; in Kosova it was only 12.1 per cent or 1 in each 8.3 inhabitants. Thus, although Kosova has 7.8 per cent of the population of Yugoslavia, it has only 3.3 per cent of its number employed.(33) The national structure of employed people also shows discrimination against Albanians. In Kosova, one in each 4-5 Montenegrins or Serbs is employed, and only one in each 13 Albanians.

The average personal income of employees in Kosova is only 50 per cent of the average for Yugoslavia. Even the Albanians who have work can secure only a low standard of living for their families.(34) Since 1979, personal incomes have been falling steadily, 5-6 per cent a year, and now are at the level of 20 years ago. More than 100 thousand Kosova families need houses, while most of the existing ones have no hydro-sanitary facilities.(35) The high infant mortality rate of 55.8 per thousand, or twice the Yugoslav average, is evidence of the grave state of the health service. The illiteracy, which is still high, is another sign of backwardness. In Kosova, today, 18 per cent of the population, or 200 000 persons over 10 years of age (70 per cent of them females) are illiterate.(36) In recent years, under the pretext of measures to prevent the exodus of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova, the latter get many privileges, including priority in jobs and houses, which makes the situation for the Albanian nationality even more difficult.(37)



The economic backwardness of Kosova has caused widespread unemployment and economic emigration. At the end of 1988, the number of officially recorded unemployed was 145 000, 22 per cent of them females.(38) However, the real number is at least twice as high, because many are not registered at labour offices. About 78 per cent of the unemployed are under 30 years of age, and 30 000 have passed this age without ever finding a job. Qualified workers and young people with secondary or higher schooling make up 56.2 per cent of them. About 6 300 persons have been registered for eight years and are still waiting for work.(39) Amongst the jobless there are women, although 90 per cent of them are engaged in household work and do not register as job seekers. Finally, according to the calculations of the trade-unions of Kosova, more than 60 000 families have no employed member; in Kosova, in 1986, the Albanians made up 69 per cent of those employed and 81 per cent of the unemployed.(40) This problem is getting worse. There seems no way out at the present rate of progress, because Kosova can provide each year jobs for only one quarter of those seeking work for the first time.(41) It is forecast that, by the end of the century, the number of unemployed will reach 700 000.(42)

In the regions with Albanian populations outside Kosova, the problem of unemployment is even more serious. In Tetova, Gostivar and other communes of Macedonia, in Presheva and Bujanovic of Serbia there is no work for native-born Albanians, at a time when Macedonians from distant parts are brought in and placed in jobs, or preference is given to newly arrived Serbs.(43)

Unemployment has compelled large number of the population of Kosova and other Albanian regions to emigrate to other countries of Europe and other continents. According to the Association for Endangered Peoples in Gottingen (FR of Germany), in the last 15 years, of the 200 000 Albanians who have abandoned their homes in Yugoslavia and have settled abroad, about 100 000 have settled in the FR of Germany, about 60 000 in Switzerland, and about 40 000 in other Western countries.(44) A large number of the Albanians have shifted to various regions in Yugoslavia. The press of Kosova claims that 200 000 emigrant Kosovar workers are living in other parts of the country.(45) At the same time, it reports that thousands of Albanians have gone beyond the borders of the European continent, to the USA and other countries. It says that New York alone has 30 000 Albanians from Yugoslavia.(46)

The above facts prove that the backwardness of Kosova and the other parts with Albanian population in Yugoslavia remains a grave problem. Its political and social consequences are felt, first of all, in Kosova and all over Yugoslavia.



## NOTES

- 1 I.Gucia, *The Natural Resources as Factors for the Economic Development of the ASR of Kosova*, Prishtina 1982, pp.73-74; see also Rilindja, Prishtina, February 14, 1988, p.6.
- 2 *Statistical Yearbook of the ASR of Kosova*, 1985, Prishtina 1985, p.32.
- 3 Rilindja, Prishtina, February 14, 1988, p.6.
- 4 *Statistical Yearbook of the ASR of Kosova*, 1985, Prishtina 1985, p.152.
- 5 Rilindja, Prishtina, February 14, 1988, p.6.
- 6 I.Gucia, *op.cit.*, p.95, 105, 113, 117.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 J.Reuter, *Die Albaner in Jugoslawien*, Munchen 1982, p.57; Prishtina, May 1-2, 1987, p.8; *ibid.* November 8, 1987, p.7.
- 9 *Kosovo-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989, pp.183-189, 190-196.
- 10 A.Pushka, *The Relations Between Employment, the Social Product Per Capita and the Birth-rate*, "Perparimi", no.5, Prishtina 1985, pp.624-628.
- 11 Rilindja, Prishtina, February 21, 1988, p.11.
- 12 T.Abdyli, *The Development of the Industry in Kosova*, 1978, p.75.
- 13 Rilindja, Prishtina, February 13, 1988, p.7; *ibid.*, February 14, 1988, p.6.
- 14 Rilindja, February 21, 1988, p.11.
- 15 *Ibid.*, December 10, 1987, p.6.
- 16 *Ibid.*, July 18, 1988, p.1, 4.
- 17 Rilindja, October 8, 1981, "Three from Kosova".
- 18 *Ibid.*, March 12, 1988, p.7; April 12, 1988, p.6.
- 19 *Ibid.*, December 11, 1986, pp.2-3; February 28, 1988, p.5.
- 20 Rilindja, July 20, 1989, p.1.
- 21 *Ibid.*, June 12, 1988, p.6.
- 22 *Ibid.*, April 6, 1988, pp.1-2.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 *Ibid.*, February 25, 1988, p.9.
- 25 Rilindja, February 6, 1988, p.8; June 12, 1988, p.6.
- 26 TANJUG, Belgrade, March 18, 1988.
- 27 *The Statistical Yearbook of the ASR of Kosova*, 1985, p.82.
- 28 Rilindja, Prishtina, June 1, 1988, p.4.
- 29 *The Statistical Yearbook of the SAP of Kosova*, 1985, pp.109-111, 427.
- 30 Rilindja, Prishtina, May 8, 1988, p.8.
- 31 *Statistical Yearbook of the ASR of Kosova*, 1985, p.109.
- 32 Rilindja, Prishtina, February 17, 1988, p.11.
- 33 Rilindja, April 18, 1987, p.6; February 3, 1988, p.7.
- 34 *Ibidem*, February 6, 1988, p.8.
- 35 *Ibidem*, April 4, 1987, p.7; February 1, 1988, p.7; February 6, 1988, pp.7-8; February 21, 1988, p.6; March 8, 1988, p.7; May 14, 1988, p.6; TANJUG, Belgrade, January 17, 1989.
- 36 *Ibidem*.
- 37 Rilindja, Prishtina, July 24, 1988, p.6; August 19, 1988, p.5.
- 38 Rilindja, October 1, 1988, p.7; December 7, 1988, p.7.
- 39 *Ibidem*, May 8, 1988, p.7.
- 40 *Ibidem*, May 18, 1985, p.7; April 4, 1986, p.7; July 21, 1987, p.7; January 21, 1989, p.7.
- 41 *Ibidem*, February 14, 1988, p.6.



42 *TANJUG*, Belgrade, October 28, 1988.

43 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, July 7, 1988, p.5.

44 *Ibidem*, January 21, 1989, p.6.

45 *Ibidem*, May 26, 1989, p.9.

46 *ibidem*, August 17, 1988, p.12.



Prof. MICHEL ROUX  
(Toulouse - France)

### **...KOSOVA: A RETARDED AND INSUFFICIENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (\*)**

To those who stay there, Kosova may appear as an enclave of the third world in Europe: frequent misery, massive under-employment, considerable mortality, illiteracy; small-plot peasants working with archaic implements; the last big patriarchal families, the "zadruga"; (1) a population two-thirds rural and one-half agricultural; and a "galloping" birth rate. In a violent contrast, which is also characteristic of the third world, there are giants of industrial and urban enterprises. But the comparison changes suddenly. Yugoslavia is not a fully developed country, according to the criteria of the World Bank; it can be seen in its exports, or its national product. Its institutions and infrastructures and its capability for sending economic assistance to the territory of Kosova express this lack of growth...

Although its constitution into a socio-political community has been determined by the presence of a population Albanian in its majority, the borders of the Autonomous Socialist Region of Kosova (10 887 square km) have no ethnic significance; they run more often along lines of heights, leaving out many Albanian concentrations, whereas the Kosova community of Leposavic is purely Serbian. Its relief is made up of two depressions, that of Kosova to the east and that of Metohija (Dukagjin in Albanian) to the west, surrounded and separated by highlands...

With substantial mineral and power resources and with two of the main cultivable plains of southern Yugoslavia, Kosova is not at all a passive region, like the Karst of Herzegovina or Dalmatia, for example, where individual consumption depends largely on contributions from emigrant workers and where economic possibilities are limited. If one adds that Kosova now is sufficiently well linked with the rest of the country (2) and that its main cities have good links among themselves, one can see that it fulfils all the necessary conditions for regional development according to Yugoslav plans. Taking into account only the economic aspects, one notes an unequal progress in different sectors of agriculture and industry.

The agriculture of Kosova disposes of 590 000 ha, of which 400 000 are cultivable. As in the rest of the Yugoslav economy, there is a big contrast between the enterprises of the "social sector", which are large and well-equipped and produce only for the market, and a mass of very small individual enterprises. The social sector here covers only 11.5 per cent of the arable land (15 per cent in the whole of Yugoslavia) and accounts for a quarter of the total agricultural income. Most of the work organizations (3) are grouped in the agro-industrial combine of Agrokosovo, which possesses 35 700 ha of arable land, 3 700 ha of vineyards, 1 150 ha of fruitplots and 38 000 ha of pastures and meadows. The combine processes its own products and, under contract, those of many thousands of private producers in its industrial installations (sugar and beer factories, oil presses, wine cellars, slaughter-houses, canning factories). It sells these products, vines especially, all over Yugoslavia.

Quite different is the picture of the private farms, which are small (most of them: oscillate from one to 5 ha), strongly oriented towards self-consumption, most of them equipped with archaic implements and achieving yield rates for wheat and maize which are one third and one half, respectively, of the average of the country. If one considers that there is one agricultural worker for less than 2 ha and that the density of the agricultural population per cultivated square km is 180, whereas the Yugoslav mean is 70, (4) one is easily convinced that



private agriculture in Kosova cannot feed its townpeople - its surpluses for the market are small and irregular - but its usefulness lies in its extraordinary capacity to retain the work force; this is an unusual fact in Yugoslavia and, perhaps, in Europe, that the agricultural population of Kosova is growing constantly, going from 593 000 people (1948 census) over to 641 000 people (1971 census) to 655 000 people (1978 estimation). During the same time, the rural population in Yugoslavia as a whole has fallen from 10.6 to 6.6 million, and this decline is more rapid where the level of economic development is higher in Republics and autonomous regions.(5) Not that rural exodus is unknown in Kosova; although precise data are lacking, one may estimate it as high as in Croatia. But the natural growth of the rural population of this Republic is almost nil, while it is about 3 per cent for Kosova. This retention is facilitated by incomes from outside the sphere of agriculture, which are realized within the province or even outside it and from which a number of households benefit. This prevents Kosova from making its mass of under-employed people able to provide for themselves, and its unemployed, a burden and a threat to society. The traditional socio-economic structure of the countryside depends on powerful family solidarities, associated with vanishing moral values and codes of conduct. On the other hand, this also hinders the modernization of agriculture. So it is necessary to create a large number of non-agricultural jobs. However, nothing has been done in this direction up to now. In 1978, Kosova had only 152 000 non-agricultural jobs (for a population which at that time was estimated at about 1 500 000), 53 000 of them in industry.

The industry of Kosova comprises 163 work organizations divided into 30 of the 35 branches of the Yugoslav classification.(6) It accounts for 2.2 per cent of the total value of the country's industrial production (1978). The products the region specializes in are either minerals or the result of their primary transformation; the others are mainly construction materials or consumer goods the production of which in most cases is inadequate for local consumption. The engineering, electric, electronic and chemical industries are almost non-existent. Of 15 products, from which Kosova supplies more than 10 per cent of the national production (25 per cent of lignite, 15 per cent of thermal electric power, 43 per cent of lead and zinc minerals, 65 per cent of processed lead, 27 per cent of processed zinc, 22 per cent of accumulators, 14 per cent of sulphuric acid, 18 per cent of phosphate fertilizers, 15 per cent of seamed tubes, 12 per cent of cotton yarn, 14 per cent of rubber articles), 10 come from two enterprises which provide about half the industrial jobs of the province. These two are the mining, metallurgical and chemical combine of Trepçe in Titova Mitrovica (7) (extraction and metallurgy of non-ferrous minerals, accumulators, phosphate fertilizers), and the mining, power, metallurgical and chemical combine Kosovo of Obilic (near Prishtina) (lignite mines, thermal-power stations).

As a function of its natural resources, Kosova supplies power and primary materials, for the most part, destined for the rest of Yugoslavia, where they are processed. Cases of the local processing of local resources (accumulators) are rare, and there are few industrial units of any importance which are not related to a "natural vocation". One may mention three of them: the shock-absorber factory of Prishtina, the only factory of its kind in the Balkans; the metallurgical factory of Kosova (IMK) at Urosevac, which belongs to the Jugometal Combine and uses the steel sheets of Smederevo (Serbia) to manufacture spirally seamed pipes (for oil and gas pipe lines), which are exported on a large scale to the Soviet Union and other COMECON countries; the "Balkan" enterprise of Suha Reka, the only Yugoslav producer of rubber belt conveyors.

One suspects that the industrial development of Kosova cannot resolve the problem of unemployment, which is the most acute in the province. In 1980, it had 207 jobs per 1 000 able-bodied people,(8) with the Yugoslav mean being 401 and maximum 682 (Slovenia); in the same year there were 384 registered persons in search of work per 1 000 people employed (the federal mean 136 and the federal minimum 14 in Slovenia). We cannot appreciate the aims of this policy without examining the causes and the gap between the aims and their fulfilment.



The question here is to correct regional discrepancies Yugoslavia is trying to remove.(9)

In the field of regional development, the Yugoslav authorities have quickly enough created specific institutions and ways of financing, as a simple policy of allotting investments according to sectors, which could not achieve the desired effect. However, their activities have fluctuated both in their methods and in the selection of geographical area. It is remarkable that Kosova, the most backward region of the country, before 1957 did not figure on the official list of under-developed regions, because it was not yet a distinct socio-political community. The Republic of Serbia did not permit Kosova, which depends on it, to develop on its own. In fact, the main task, which became more complicated after the break with the Soviet Union in 1948, was reconstruction, so that, on the point of regional restructuring, one did not go beyond the phase of declarations of principle.

From 1957 on, what was called the autonomous territory of Kosova and Metohija (Kosmet) began benefiting, like the other under-developed regions, from "guaranteed investments" (that is without obligation of return) and low interest loans on the part of a federal agency, the General Fund of Investment. In 1961, regional policy became more precise with the creation of a specific agency, "The Federal Fund for the Development of Regions with Insufficient Economic Development", which, during the five-year plan 1961-1965, would allot 19.8 per cent of its resources to Kosova. However, the formula has been judged as not too favourable to the latter, because a clause, that enterprises should themselves finance 30 per cent of the cost of projects to become eligible for loans, frequently eliminated the Kosova units, which could not afford such a self-financing effort.

The formula in force at present was worked out in the context of the economic reform of 1965,(10) when the Federal Fund for crediting the economic development of the insufficiently developed republics and the Province of Kosova /sic/ was set up. This fund is supplied by all the Republics and Autonomous Provinces, in proportion to their part in the Yugoslav social product, each of them putting their economic organizations to contributions in the form of compulsive loans. It centralizes these funds and divides them among the under-developed regions, according to an agreement concluded among the latter. In each of them there is a bank to relay the credits to the enterprises. Each republic or province which receives assistance has complete autonomy in the use of these funds. It must pay them back, but payment terms are long and interest rates minimal (for example in the 1976-1980 five-year plan: 15 years, 4 per cent, and grace term of 3 years), especially if one considers the annual inflation rate of Yugoslavia, which was about 20 per cent in 1970. Hence, one may come to the conclusion that this way of financing regional economic development is, for one part, an aid in the strict meaning of the term: precisely to the measure in which the counterpart is less than the sums granted.

The total annual amount of the investment funds at the disposal of the Federal Fund for the 1966-1970 five-year period was equal to 1.85 per cent of the social product of the Yugoslav economy, this proportion was raised to 1.94 per cent. Kosova has successively been granted 25.7 per cent (1966-1970), 33.2 per cent (1971-1975) and 37.1 per cent (1976-1980). This ensemble of mechanisms, which must be completed by mentioning the budgetary assignments of the Federation for covering part of the social expenditure and the possibility given to enterprises of the developed regions to replace part of their contributions to the Fund through direct investments in the under-developed regions, has been praised as "a prototype of North-South cooperation." (11) This comparison gives rise to two questions: "Does not the North - which in Yugoslavia, too, is actually the North - mould the economy of the South according to its own interests and does it not recuperate, in one way or another, more than the national solidarity calls on it to grant the latter ?

What has been said above about the industrial specialization of Kosova suggests that the reply to the first question is positive... Whatever the case, the present situation is to the benefit



of the economically more developed Republics which create many jobs on their territory by producing consumer goods and equipment for the whole of the country and cover the South with their commercial networks. As Yugoslavia bases its planning on utilizing its natural resources, it is normal for the Kosova economy to be relatively specialized in basic industries, although they do not account for much in the Province's industries, although they do not account for much in the Province's industrial map. From this point of view, the utilization of the resources supplied by the Federal Fund is significant : 80 per cent have gone only to industry in the course of the five-year plan 1966-1970, and two thirds in the following decade. Here four branches (electric power, coal, non-ferrous minerals and metals, chemical industry) take the lion's share, especially in the beginning of the period. The Federal Fund accounts for about two-thirds of the investments made in the economy of Kosova, while it represents only an auxiliary resource for the three under-developed republics. It is clear that the processing industry and, more so, the other economic units, lack investments.

The dominant role of the Fund can be explained by the weakness of the self-financing rate of the economy of Kosova: less than 10 per cent.(12) This results, among other things, from the Yugoslav price system. The administration which controls prices for power and basic products, tends to keep them down in order to increase the competitiveness of the enterprises which use them, while other prices are set more freely. Since 70 per cent of Kosova's industry is basic, it is at a disadvantage. It has unequal relations of exchange with the rest of Yugoslavia, with part of the value created on its territory being transferred outside and federal financing, which must be paid back, representing only a partial compensation. The leaders and press of Tirana have denounced this mechanism as a means of exploitation of the Kosova workers by the rest of Yugoslavia;(13) this has been noticed also by Yugoslav students.(14)

This mechanism represents one of the many causes of the insufficient advance of the Kosova economy in comparison with the aim of reaching the national mean. Certainly, the province has undergone a growth a little more rapid than the national mean. Thus, from 1959 to 1979, the social product, reckoned at constant prices, has increased by 243 per cent as against 239 per cent for the whole of Yugoslavia. However, having a rapidly increasing population, for the same period Kosova recorded only a 102 per cent growth of the social product per capita, as against 178 per cent for the whole of Yugoslavia. Its case is similar to that of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which also specializes in heavy industry (139 per cent), and dissimilar to that of Macedonia and Montenegro (192 and 196 per cent, respectively). This evolution is the more disquieting as, immediately after the war, Kosova was already very backward economically. Whereas in 1953, the social product per inhabitant was only 42 per cent of the Yugoslav mean and 654 per cent of the under-developed regions, these figures have fallen to 28 per cent and 48 per cent in 1979. However, both demographic and socio-economic causes must be considered here.

#### **IV. Demographic, social and political problems of Kosova**

First of all, it must be stated that the age structure shows that the able-bodied section represents only 52.7 per cent of the total population of Kosova, as against 64.5 per cent of that of Yugoslavia. Reckoned by able-bodied persons, the social product per capita reaches 35 per cent of the Yugoslav mean and 57 per cent of that of the under-developed regions. However, even taking account of the age structure, the active population of Kosova is not so numerous. Whereas by the specific rate of national activities it ought to rise to 34.4 per cent of the total population, it is only 25 per cent (42.1 per cent for the whole of Yugoslavia); with the adult male population having an activity rate near to the Yugoslav mean, this cannot be explained but with the exclusion of Kosova women (that is to say, Albanian women of Moslem cultural



tradition) from all professional activities. Only 16 per cent of Albanian women are active, as against half of the Yugoslav women from 15 to 19 years of age.(15) On the other hand, the socio-professional structure plays a role here. If the social product per active person reaches only 47 per cent of the Yugoslav mean and 66 per cent of that of the under-developed regions, the cause must be sought in the large number of low-productivity farms. As far as the workers of the "social sector" are concerned, the difference (68 and 89 per cent) shows a lower work productivity, explained by the lower skills of the work force and the tendency to employ more workers under the pressure of the milieu than one would do in other cases. A more detailed analysis would show that work productivity is lower than the national mean in practically all the branches of the economy.

To explain the insufficient rate of economic development in Kosova, Yugoslav or foreign analysts refer to many factors, the mutual relationship and the relative importance of which, however, are obscure, as a report to the World Bank suggests.(16) Some of them are ideological. They may be grouped into three categories:

- Factors related to the mode of development. The means allotted to the Province are insufficient and excessively concentrated on heavy industry, which does not create many jobs; the Federal Fund is only a financing pump without a policy of intervention of its own, whereas the development of retarded regions (and indeed the whole of the country) lacks orientation and coordination.

- Factors related to the global relations between Kosova and the rest of Yugoslavia. It is a question of unequal exchanges which impair the rate of accumulation, hence, the massive intervention of the Federal Fund, hence the high weight of payment annuities still to the detriment of accumulation (a vicious circle). Here we must add the very little inclination of the Yugoslav enterprises to invest in Kosova.

- Factors inherent in Kosova itself. Poor capacity of the local managers to value the productivity of a project, to prepare and implement it (according to the report of the World Bank already mentioned); insufficient work skills and productivity; too rapid population growth.

The last argument comes up frequently. More brutally, a Belgrade economist declared recently that Kosova had to choose between demographic and economic growth, as if the rate of demographic growth as a factor might be changed within a short time and as if one could hold an entire population collectively responsible for its high birth-rate. One feels here the irritation the "galloping" birth-rate of the Albanians causes in Yugoslavia today.(17)

Be as it may, an economic policy should not overlook the demographic variable. Kosova has not been given sufficient resources, which has become apparent very soon. As early as ten years ago, it was seen that, from 1953 to 1969, grants of 3 per cent of Yugoslav investments had not prevented Kosova from losing ground in terms of social product per capita, and it was reckoned that, to straighten things out, Kosova ought to receive from now on 4.7 per cent of these investments, that is, twice as much as it contributed to Yugoslav income.(18) And the authorities stressed the need for stepping up the effort in favour of Kosova: "A development more rapid than the national mean of the underdeveloped republics is among the essential aims of the coming ten-year period in Kosova. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia will see to the accelerated development of these republics and adopt specific measures in favour of Kosova, in order to reduce the gap separating it from the mean of the country."(19)

But neither analyses of the economists nor political declarations have prevented Kosova from continuously losing ground more than the rest of Yugoslavia during the seventies, and the problem of employment has become even worse, about which the media are very explicit...(20)

The leaders and enterprises of Kosova in Yugoslavia, and first of all, in the Republic of Serbia, have such negotiating power and sufficient political weight as to change things, as some signs allow us to suspect. One might wonder at the persistence of this situation deplored by all. The regime of Tirana, of course, speaks of a colonization of Kosova in the interests of



Yugoslavia. The experts of the World Bank and the Yugoslav officials and economists themselves dislike it. President Tito in person, during his last tour of the region, declared: "You have an extracting industry here, which has been of no material benefit to anyone. More attention ought to have been paid to the development of a processing industry, even relying on local resources in the beginning. But this is not sufficient, either. Our big enterprises ought to have built their own factories here." (21)

The development of the economy of Kosova does not keep pace with the growth of its population. One of the paradoxes of Yugoslavia is that the poorest of its eight main divisions (in regard to per capita income) has the greatest density and most rapid growth. The number of Kosova's inhabitants has grown four times since the beginning of the century and more than doubled since 1948, when it had a population of 733 000 (since 1948 the population of Yugoslavia as a whole has grown by 40 per cent). The density of the population in Kosova is 145 inhabitants per sq. km, as against 90 for the whole of Yugoslavia. Today, the Kosova population which increased from 964 000 in 1961 to 1 585 000 in 1981 (64.4 per cent) has a higher growth rate than the Belgrade urban region.

Another noteworthy phenomenon is the reduction in the number of Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosova. In 1948, the Serbs made up 24 per cent of the total and the Montenegrins 3.8 per cent. In 1981, these figures had fallen to 13.2 per cent and 1.7 per cent respectively, while, for Albanians, they rose from 67.9 to 77.5 per cent, as their birth-rate continued to be much higher than that of the Serbs. The latter, just like their Montenegrin counterparts, are leaving the region because of the insecurity they feel as a result of the growing number, influence and demands of the Albanians. (22)

The Yugoslav model of the movement of the population within the country is of the ethnocentripetal type: i.e., the migrants prefer to shift to the metropolises where their co-nationals make up the majority. This is true of the capital of the Federation, Belgrade, too, where Serbs from as far as Dalmatia are flocking to. Now the Albanians are the only main nationality to which this rule does not apply, because their territory is a centre of neither urban nor industrial growth. The Albanians largely outnumber the Macedonians, but Prishtina is far from being the equivalent of Shkup. Taking into account their difficult social acceptance in other regions, due to the bad image attributed to them, and the reaction of rejection towards them, (24) their concentration in one place is understandable. According to the census of 1971, there were only 30 000 Albanians permanently living outside their traditional territories in Kosova and 18 neighbouring communes in Macedonia, Serbia proper and Montenegro; they make up only 2.3 per cent of the total of Albanians and less than that of worker emigrants (35 000 - probably an underestimated figure, counting only the able-bodied persons).

In the last three decades the demographic growth of Kosova has been much more rapid than that of the other regions of Yugoslavia. (25) At the beginning of the 50s, the birth - and death-rate of Kosova was approximately the same as that of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Southern Serbia; however, as the death-rate increased and the birthrate fell in other parts of Yugoslavia, the opposite occurred in Kosova. The demographic pattern of the Serbs of Kosova whose birthrate was initially higher than that of the Albanians underwent the same change as that of the Yugoslav population, in general. On the other hand, while the birthrate of Albanians hardly declined, their death-rate underwent a drastic reduction from 20.8 per cent in 1953, to 8.7 per cent in 1971. The persistence of a high birth-rate among Albanians can be explained with Moslem cultural traditions (at a time when Moslem religious practice is on the decline). Meanwhile the birthrate of the other Moslem populations of Yugoslavia has greatly decreased in the last 20 years. Thus, the high birth-rate of Albanians (both of Kosova and Albania) seems to be the result of a national phenomenon rather than religious tradition. With a birthrate of 29 per cent in 1971 (33 per cent for the Albanian population), Kosova, with only 7 per cent of the total Yugoslav population, contributed 22 per cent of the total natural growth of Yugoslavia,



i.e. more than Serbia proper and Vojvodina taken together, with a population five times that of Kosova...

The fundamental question, however, is whether the Albanians will gain the position they are entitled to as a nationality in Yugoslav society.

We have seen that all the regions populated mainly by Albanians are under-developed economically. And we must add that, despite major progress, the Albanians remain relatively at a disadvantage on the socio-professional plane. In 1971, 58 per cent of the Albanian population were farmers. Let us see how they fare on the cultural and political plane. The establishment of an education system in the Albanian language after liberation, which was crowned with the founding in 1970 of the bilingual University of Prishtina, resulted in an unprecedented cultural boom, also, favoured by cooperation with Albania. (25) This is especially apparent in the field of literature, art and humanitarian sciences, through which the Albanians can now give a proper answer to those who had appropriated their history. Although a margin of criticism is allowed, unanimity of opinion is compulsory over anything affecting the fundamental postulates of the Yugoslav socio-political system. The Albanian intelligentsia and leadership cannot disregard them without incurring repression.

In conclusion, we can say that, giving up the policy of the expulsion of Albanians or their assimilation through the destruction of their national identity, the Yugoslav leaders are trying to integrate them into the social, political and ideological life of the country by favouring the consolidation of their identity, but without carrying this process through to its logical conclusion. From an autonomous territory (*autonomna oblast*) of the Republic of Serbia, in 1969, by constitutional amendments Kosova was turned into an autonomous province (*autonomna pokrajina*), the exact juridical equivalent of Vojvodina with much greater independence of management than it ever had in the past.

However, even today, the demand to raise Kosova to the rank of a Federal Republic (which would enable the Albanians to depend less on the direct tutelage the Serbs exercise on Kosova within the framework of the Republic of Serbia) is considered by the Yugoslav leaders as a prelude to secession and not as a demand founded on the principle of equality of rights. (26) The Belgrade correspondent of *Le Monde* explains: "Yugoslavia is the mother country of its Slav peoples, not of the Albanians of Kosova, whose mother country lies on the other side of the Yugoslav border, in the PSR of Albania." This leads us to the definition of the word *motherland* which is being used in a very strange way: "Nation, political community to which one belongs or to which one has the feeling of belonging; *country inhabited by this community*" (Robert). So the motherland of the Albanians of Yugoslavia is not the country in which they are born and of which they are citizens... One meets here with a distinction, being constantly used in contemporary Yugoslav terminology, between nations (*narodi*), with their centre of gravitation in Yugoslavia proper, and nationalities (*narodnosti*) with their "motherland" outside Yugoslavia's borders. However, is this statistical distinction sufficient to make, barring all other considerations, a distinction of political significance between nations and nationalities, with only the former having the right to constitute a federative republic? Superimposed on economic and social difficulties, this political problem makes the solution of the Kosova problem even more difficult and leads the interested parties to dig their heels in national antagonisms. Failing to fully accept, even today, all the implications of the presence of a large Albanian community on its territory, Yugoslavia comes up against an essential difficulty in the accomplishment of its self-managing socio-political projects.



### Kosova: regional development and the integration into Yugoslavia

	Year	Birthrate	Deathrate	Population growth
Kosova, total population	1953	42.6	20.6	22.0
	1961	41.8	12.1	29.7
	1971	37.5	8.2	29.3
Kosova Serb population	1953	41.2	13.8	27.4
	1961	31.3	8.5	22.8
	1971	22.4	6.8	15.6
Kosova, Albanian population	1953	45.9	25.1	20.8
	1961	46.3	14.1	32.2
	1971	42.3	8.7	33.6
Yugoslavia	1953	28.4	12.4	16.0
	1961	22.7	9.0	13.7
	1971	18.3	8.7	9.6

Per cent per thousand inhabitants

\* Sources: *Demografske, socijalne i ekonomske karakteristike stanovništva nacionalnosti u Jugoslaviji* IDN, Centar za demografska istraživanja, Belgrade, 1973; *Vjetar statistikor i Jugosllavise*, 1962, 1965, 1975.



## NOTES

\* Abridged from the journal *Hérodote*, May-July 1982.

1 One of them was described by Guy SITBON, *Seven hundred mouths to feed* in "Nouvel Observateur" of November 8, 1976. The author, however, fails to say that the question is about Albanians. The last Zadruga are found in Kosova, especially, in the region of Metohija. In the 1971 census, there were still 9 000 "households" with more than 15 members and 300 with more than 20 members.

2 Kosova is traversed by two railways from Belgrade to Skopje; four good roads link it with Belgrade, Southeast Serbia and Macedonia; it has an airport. Communications with the Adriatic coast are more difficult; tortuous itineraries through high mountains, which are snow-bound in winter; no direct link with the Belgrade-Bar railway, which passes only 60 km to the west of Pec (Peja in Albanian), hence the necessity of a long by-pass by Kraljevo and Titovo Uzice to reach the port of Bar, which in this manner is more distant than Salonica.

3 The term "work organization" in Yugoslavia is applied to a collective of self-administering workers which, according to its size, may be a basic organization of joint work, an organization of joint work, or a complex organization of joint work (order of size respectively: enterprise section, enterprise, big enterprise with many factories).

4 Estimation worked out for 1978 from the data of *Statisticki Godisnjak Jugoslavije* (Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia), Savezni zavod za statistiku, Belgrade 1979.

5 Michel Roux, *Problèmes agraires yougoslaves*, "Etudes rurales", no.73, Paris 1979.

6 Mines included, and building and public works excluded. Yugoslav classification is different from the standard international classification of economic activities.

7 Kosovska Mitrovica until 1981.

8 Employed persons; persons with a work contract in the social sector or in the private sector. The latter, accounting for less than 2 per cent of the employed of the active population, the able-bodied population or the total population, gives a sufficiently good idea of the regional development of the social sector whose jobs are essentially industrial or tertiary. The rest of the active population comprises the individual peasants, the craftsmen working on their own, people in search of work and temporary workers (that is the official term) working abroad.

9 Example: "For some parts of Yugoslavia, which are retarded for historical reasons, equality could be only formal if socialist society were not to set itself the task of their rapid development. The latter, which is also supposed to increase the contribution of the under-developed regions to the Yugoslav economy, conforms also with the interest of the whole country: this is a necessity for all the peoples of Yugoslavia." (Program of the LCY, 1958, p.160).

10 The economic reform of 1965 has, among other things, given enterprises full responsibility of management, which is on the line of the self-government project, but also serves productive aims.

11 Manuel LUCBERT. *Le Monde*, December 30, 1976.

12 The difference between total investment and total contributions of the Federal Fund and the funds of local enterprises is made up of classical bank credits obtained from Yugoslav or foreign banks.

13 For example: "The price policy applied by the Federation and the republics towards Kosova, which causes losses to the enterprises of the latter, results in a good part of the income realized through the workers of Kosova being distributed among the other republics (*Albania Today*, no.4, 1979, pp.57-62).

14 For example, Musa LIMANI, *Investicije i privredni razvoj socialisticke Autonomne Pokrajine Kosova* (Investments and the economic development of the Autonomous Socialist



Province of Kosova), "Zavod za udzbenike i nastavna sredstva SAP Kosova", Prishtina 1980.

15 These activity rates are estimations for 1979 derived from the data of the *Statisticki kalendar Jugoslavije*, Belgrade, Savezni Zavod za statistiku, and those of the *Projekcije Stanovništva Jugoslavije 1970-2000* (Forecasts of the population of Yugoslavia from 1970 to 2000), published jointly by Savezni zavod za statistiku and by *Institut društvenih nauka, centar za demografska istraživanja*, Belgrade 1973. There is some doubt about the reliability of the statistics of the active population of Kosova: the 1961 census gave the province an activity rate of 34.4 per cent, that of 1971 only 26 per cent. This diminution is found in no other region of the country. It implies a fall by more than half of the activity rate of women. One knows how difficult it is to determine who is active and who is not - in the meaning accepted in statistics - especially as far as the male population of the countryside is concerned, but here the difference is such that one doubts that the former result may have been produced to conceal underemployment while the latter, to reveal it. It must always be kept in mind that they were published in very different political contexts.

16 Vinod DUBEY and others, *Yugoslavia : Development with Decentralization*. A World Bank Country Economic Report. The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore. 1975.

17 Expression employed by Manuel LUCBERT, *op.cit.*

18 Ivo VINSKI, *Regionalna podjela društvenog proizvoda Jugoslavije 1968-1985* (Regional repartition of the social product of Yugoslavia from 1968 to 1985), *Ekonomski pregled*, 1-2, Zagreb, 1972; *Investicije i fiksni fondovi Jugoslavije 1970-1985* (Investments and fixed funds 1970-1985), *Ekonomski pregled*, p7-8, 1972.

19 The 10th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, June 3, 1974, p.23.

20 "During a recent debate in the Yugoslav parliament, it was said that during the three first years of the medium-term (five-year) plan, Kosova had advanced by half less rapidly than the mean of the country, when it ought to have surpassed it by 60 per cent. And the social product per inhabitant has diminished, declining from 33.2 per cent of the national mean in 1975, to 30.3 per cent two years later. S.RABRENOVIC, *Nin*, no.1469, March 4, 1979, p.11.

21 *Politika*, October 17, 1979, p.1.

22 Pavle Yankovic dwelt on this question in *Le Monde*, March 25, 1969 in the article "The Serb Question Lies There", he takes it up again in similar terms (*Le Monde*, January 19, 1981) when referring to the recent unrest: "Thousands of Serbs and Montenegrins, especially those living in small localities far from the big cities, have emigrated to northern Serbia; they think that they are threatened by the Albanians who constitute the overwhelming majority of the rural population and that the authorities do not properly defend them. *NIN*, (no.1612, November 22, 1981), dwells on the pressure the Albanians exercise on them and demands that an end be put to it.

23 Michel Roux, *Eléments de réflexion sur l'identité nationale du ethnique chez les populations minoritaires en Yougoslavie* in "Identités collectives et Changements sociaux", collective authorship under the guidance of Pierre Tap, Privat, Toulouse 1980.

24 See Hivzi Islami, *Le développement démographique du Kosovo*, "Revue géographique de l'Est", nos.1-2, 1979.

25 Michel Roux, *Langue et Pouvoir en Yougoslavie: le cas des Albanais*, "Pluriel", no.22, 1980.

26 "I can tell you that we consider this slogan, 'We demand the republic', not only a nationalist slogan, but also a through-and-through counter-revolutionary one, as a republic of Kosova, in the framework of Yugoslavia, is not possible, taking account of our Constitution, taking account of the national composition of Kosova, taking account of the decision taken since the National Liberation War and taking account of the fact that the constitution of a republic of Kosova in Yugoslavia would actually mean the disintegration of Yugoslavia". (Stane DOLANC, member of the Leading Committee of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, press conference of April 6, 1981).



## THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS OF KOSOVA AND THEIR INTERPRETATION (\*)

Kosova and the Albanians became the focus of concern of the entire public of Yugoslavia, Europe and the world for the first time in the early 1980's and this concern is steadily increasing. In the context of the discussion about Kosova and the Albanians, in Serbia and throughout Yugoslavia, demographic problems, especially the birth rate, migrations and demographic growth have not escaped attention. In this connection, in the almost total absence of ability to make a rational judgement, an endless number of questions are presented, various solutions, proposed dubious aims and motifs are stressed and clear neo-malthusian demands underlined. The interest of society in the demographic problems of Kosova is increasing and this is due to the present percentage of birth among the Albanians and migrations to and from Kosova of only part of the population (Serbs and Montenegrins), while the irreplaceable role of science in throwing light on, clarifying and solving these questions and interpreting other demographic data has been negated or its conclusions have been strongly denied.

In the following examination of the question, in the context of Kosova-Serbia-Yugoslavia relations and vice versa, we shall concentrate our attention on two key sectors of demographic development: the birth-rate and the migrations of the population and their interpretation.

### I

1- A look at the main characteristics of the population, the economy and social development of Kosova after the Second World War shows that up to the mid 60s, in Serbia and Yugoslavia, no sincere interest had been expressed about ensuring that this province and the Albanians developed economically and were included in the general development of social life and cultural emancipation. The main preoccupation of the bureaucratic-unitarian concept of society until those years was that the question of the Albanians should be solved once and for all mainly through their deportation to the feudal regions of Turkey and particularly to the unpopulated zones of Anatolia. The policy of investments in Kosova shows this clearly. Investments were made not in the processing capacities and the branches of intensive production which lead to increased employment of males and females, but directed mainly to the development of production of energy and raw materials, to the branches with low capacity for accumulation and reproduction, in which the interests not only of Serbia but also of the whole of Yugoslavia were represented. In the first five-year plan of development (1947-1951), very narrow limits were set for economic activities in Kosova (production of bricks, tiles and limestone, kiln dried timber, carpets and tin-plate products), while "Trepçe" and the other mines were completely dependent on the republican and federal plans. The tendency to neglect the economic development of Kosova continued up to the end of the 50s when this was considered merely an internal Serbian problem, with the result that the province was always left behind the other regions of the country and its relative backwardness steadily increased. Only since 1956 has this region been treated as an undeveloped region of the country, whereas right from the start Bosnia and Hercegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro received investments guaranteed by the state, that is, with no obligation to repay them (M.Limani 1980). In 1965 Kosova had more than 1000 villages, that is more than 70 per cent of the total with no electric power. In



Kosova socialism began to be built without the material basis of society.

2- The development of the mining and energy industries required large investments and could not exert a powerful influence in rapid industrial and urban development, increase employment especially among women and in changing the social-economic structure of the population. Besides this, these branches are a major source of pollution of the environment. In this way, extensive agriculture could not be relieved of its agrarian surpluses. The continuous growth of the absolute number of the population engaged in agriculture up to the beginning of the 70s constituted the most unfavourable manifestation of the predominantly rural and agrarian structure, therefore the "hunger" for land increased continuously as did the very high prices for arable land. For this reason, the social-demographic changes were slower, especially in the sphere of the birth rate and the infantile death rate, as well as in the field of the social, occupational and geographical mobility of the population and the urban way of life. Meanwhile, after the 60s and especially the 70s, the initial industrialization and other processes of social development had great importance in the gradual break-up of the relatively homogeneous demographic and social-economic structure of the province. Besides these changes, the birth rate began to decline (at present it is about 29 per thousand). At this period we see a regional and social-class differentiation of the population, as well as its stratification according to social criteria. The experience of populations which have gone through the transitional demographic period (fall in the death rate and birth rate, and increase in life expectancy) has shown that the decline in the death rate begins not among the whole population but only among the population of those parts where the conditions for changing the rate of reproduction have been created. The burden of reproduction is not distributed equally among all types of settlements, among different social strata of the society, and amongst populations of differing life expectancy. As a rule, in the undeveloped zones, the agrarian rural population bears the greatest burden. Until recently the rural-agrarian population of Kosova was within the limits where the demographic balance between births and deaths was attained with very great human losses, just as in all pre-industrial populations with a so-called natural increase (P.Festy, 1979).

3- In the case of the population of Kosova, too, studies show that those women who take part actively in the economy give birth to fewer children than the housewives (according to 1981 census a working woman had 3.07 children, while a housewife had 5.49 children), women working in agriculture have on average a higher fertility rate than the women employed in non-agricultural pursuits (in 1981 rural housewives had 6.74 children, while women working in non-agricultural pursuits had 2.74 children; their life-expectancy was 45-49 years) and that illiterate women, or those without the respective schooling gave birth to more children than women with higher levels of education (the mean numbers of children were: for a woman without schooling 7.04, a woman with secondary education 2.24, one with higher education 2.18). It is a fact that the Albanian women in Kosova and in other less developed regions of the country give birth to more children, while their material, social-cultural and employment position and the component of who makes the decisions at home and in society is very unfavourable to them. Their employment in the social sector is not only low (15 per cent of the total number of Albanians employed in Kosova in 1986) but an altogether new category. They are still economically dependent (in 1981 only 7.4 per cent of women were employed; in the countryside 3.9 per cent) and with inadequate schooling (in 1981, 26.3 per cent of women were illiterates, in the countryside this figure reaches 29.2 per cent while among those over 35 years of age about 60 per cent of them are illiterate). Ten years ago, the situation was even more unfavourable (H.Islami, 1985). To this day, more than 1/3 of the births in Kosova take place outside health institutions and without specialized assistance. Of the women who die in child-birth only about 65 per cent receive any medical treatment, while the level of infant mortality is very high (about 55 per thousand) with external causes of death predominating. Only since 1980 has the rural population of the province enjoyed the full protection of the



health service, but the question of pensions and insurance for invalidity remains unresolved. Only in Kosova is tuberculosis, a typically social disease, on the increase. According to estimates by Kosovar trade unions, more than 60,000 families have no member in employment.

4- The birth rate is a social and class question. It is not determined by ethnic or religious factors, nor linked with atavistic phenomena or the ideology and conscious desire for expansion: a thing which is attributed to Albanians. National identity is only one of its social features. The differences in the birth rate in different nationalities result from the unequal levels of development of socio-economic, educational and cultural life, the health services, and from the attitudes to and norms of reproduction, which are created on this basis. Even between representatives of the same nationality or religion, in zones with different levels of development the differences are marked. Throughout the post-war period, the birth rate has been higher among the Serbs in Kosova and Bosnia-Herzegovina, among the Montenegrins in Montenegro (until recently also in Kosova), among the Muslims in the Sandjak zone, among the Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosova (in 1981, 27.5 per thousand as against 15.3 per thousand in Croatia) and among the Albanians in Kosova, Macedonia and Serbia. In 1981 the Albanian women at the end of the period of fertility had the following number of children: in Kosova 6.66, in Macedonia 5.60 and in Serbia 5.75, while in Slovenia 3.07, in Croatia 3.56 and in Bosnia-Herzegovina 4.29.

The Serbian women past the period of fertility had the following number of children: in Kosova 3.42, in Bosnia-Herzegovina 2.81, in Croatia 2.02, in Vojvodina 1.87, in Serbia 1.85 and in Slovenia 1.65 children. Likewise the Montenegrin women in Kosova had 3.16 children, in Montenegro 2.95, and in Macedonia 2.59, while in Croatia 1.84, and in Slovenia 1.98 children. According to the 1981 census, for example, 15,101 Serbian women had born 5 or more children, (10,038 of them more than 6 children) and 1,400 Montenegrin women had done likewise. In the undeveloped rural zones of the province, until the recent post-war years large families were normal among the Serbs.

5- Proceeding from a series of biological, economic, social and other factors, which are linked with and conditioned by the birth rate, economic activity, employment in the economic sector and education are among the key factors which determine not only the changes in reproduction, but also in the position of women generally, and their role in family relations and in society. Through her involvement in the process of united labour, which for its part objectively requires a certain level of general and vocational education, the woman has possibilities to express her aspirations, desires, needs and other vital interests outside the family as a basic context in which her activity as a mother is realized, as well as outside the local community; she becomes more wide-ranging in her activities in society and forms quite different attitudes towards marriage and the proper age to begin it, towards pregnancy, child-birth, the family, life and death. On this basis the objective premises are created for a new awareness and new motives in regard to family planning, about accepting birth control as a "style" of conjugal life and, in the final analysis, a lower birth rate, a smaller family and reduction of the growth of the total population.

6- In general it is indisputable that society, on the basis of its scientific knowledge and general progress, and in a humane way, analyses the functioning and the entire system of attitudes and concepts which have to do with birth, life and death, and explains the great significance of marriage and the family as the basic cells of the birth and reproduction of the population, as well as the correct values of life in general. In those efforts of society however, the main directions of births and reproduction must be respected as common principles, irrespective of regional, social, national and religious belonging. Birth, as a key moment not only of demographic development but also of the general social-economic development, is an aspect of human life as important as it is sensitive, an aspect which will not tolerate



politicizing, bureaucratic manipulation, or compulsion. In the attacks on everything existing in Kosova and on the Albanians, this key sphere of human life has not been left unaffected. Indeed, today it has become the main field of attack by the local organs and rallies in the streets right up to the Federation. The Albanian woman is contemptuously described as a "child-bearing machine". This epithet is heard in the street rallies and in the political forums, in the scientific tribunes and the organs of the press. In the street demonstrations of Serbian and Montenegrin women in 1987, they shouted "The Albanians keep on increasing, but their offspring are rotten". In many discussions it can be seen clearly that the issue of the birth rate of the Albanian population is not raised simply to establish humane relations between husband and wife, in order to protect the health of the wife and improve the quality of reproduction and life. What predominated in all this is the fear of an ethnic community which, because of historical circumstances, is not of Yugoslav or Slav origin.

7- The phobia against Albanians is mounting. The Albanians are being counted and recounted every day in the newspapers and magazines, in individual discussions, in the state and political forums and at different gatherings, hypotheses are made about how many Albanians there will be in 20, 50 or 100 years' time, about how they will occupy the Serbian and Yugoslav territories, how their numbers and future increase will threaten the demographic, political and national prosperity of the Serbs, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Yugoslavia as a whole and even of the Balkan, since "in the year 2030, the Albanians will comprise the largest population in the Balkans, so this is also a strategic problem for us". (S.Dolanc, 1988). There is talk of the "bomb in diapers", "the biological expansion", the "demographic explosion" of Albanians. This is the vocabulary of conservative circles with a neo-colonialist ideology, which has been used since the Second World War about the developing countries and their peoples. Cvijic, Cubrilovic, Cosic, Ivic, Macura and others, prominent in Serbian science and culture, have spoken about the Albanians with this vocabulary. Today it is clear that this is the language and attitude of the political structures of the country. The children of Albanian nationality, born and unborn, are proclaimed enemies - further comment is unnecessary. Everything else connected with the life and development of Albanians and their aspiration for national and cultural emancipation is seen as a danger to the other peoples and cultures. Such attitudes simply add to the feeling among the Albanians of being aliens in Yugoslav society and increase the pressure for the exclusion of as many as possible of them from the category of equal citizens in the SFRY.

8- Since time finally ended the possibility of mass deportations of Albanians to Turkey which had gone on all through the first decades of the 20th century, the main demand today is: a radical reduction of the Albanians' birth rate and demographic increase. To this end, anti-social administrative state measures are proposed, like those in Macedonia, which has become a testing ground for the limitation of the general perspective of the development and civilization of the Albanians. The single nation policy of population is promoted: for the Albanians against births, for the Serbs and Macedonians, for increased births, within the same territory and under the same Constitution, and in Kosova the policy of the immigration of Serbs and Montenegrins and that of emigration for the Albanians. Such a policy is an attempt to strangle the desire of parents for a given number of heirs and thus to exert pressure on man's nature and feelings and on his thinking, just as is being done in China today, or as was done earlier in India. The manipulation of the female population and the calculations behind this are clear: recommendations and "orders" are issued to Albanians to have no more than two or three children, allegedly because the national proportions would be upset and poverty created, while the Serbs, the Macedonians and others are encouraged to have as many children as possible, because this is in the interests of the national and political cause. It is interesting that not a word is said about the Hungarians and Walachians, amongst whom there is a marked demographic decline.



9- There is continual harping on the theme that the Albanians use child-births to exploit the other zones and nationalities of the country. Efforts are made to impose on the public the belief that the progress of Kosova is impossible without reduction of the birth rate of Albanians, thus denying the true aims of this policy and that, as the prerequisite for investments for the development of this region, society, must deal with the problem of reducing the birth rate. Indeed certain authors of "memoranda" have estimated that about 90 per cent of the backwardness of Kosova is allegedly due to the natural increase in its population (K.Mihajlovic, 1987).

10- In addition to the endless series of slanders and lies of these last 150-200 years, today we hear the thesis that Albanians have children for nationalist aims, for the sole purpose of driving the Serbs from their homes and creating an "ethnically pure Kosova" and a "Greater Albania", slogans which were not heard during demonstrations and not one of hundred of thousands of prisoners has been sentenced for proclaiming them. The statement: "We are very well aware of one of the main slogans of irredentism; buy land and have children" (S.Dolanc, 1988), is one of many such fabrications. It is not possible that this politician of the Federation does not know of the report of the Organs of Internal Affairs of the province, which has been endorsed by the presidium of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosova and which says: "all the detailed information available indicates that the material means for buying the properties of Serbs and Montenegrins have not been obtained from irredentism, the organizations of emigrants or any other organization outside Yugoslavia" (Prishtina, 1987). The slogan of the 1980's is this: the more educated strata of the Albanians are enemies of the Serbs and Yugoslavia, while only the peasants and illiterates of this nationality are honest. How is it then, that the birth rate among the strata of intellectuals and better-off Albanians is much lower than that of the strata of peasants and the uneducated of this nationality, whose social condition is bad? On the other hand, to seek ideology among the uneducated peasants and the illiterate and economically dependent women is really absurd. Until today child-birth as an act and as a general process has never been described as nationalist by homo sapiens.

11- The initiators of this discussion conceive the population policy, in the afore-said sense, and family planning as reduction of the birth rate but, it seems to us that the actors in the reproduction also, see it in the same way. In fact, however, the purpose of family planning is not quantity, that is, an attempt to increase or decrease the number of children, but quality, the quality of the biosocial reproduction and an attempt to have individuals, couples, families and the population control their reproduction (D.Breznik, 1976; V.Tomsic, 1975). Such an approach to family planning in the scientific and humanitarian aspect, but proceeding from the broader social interest, is considered an acceptable and desirable aim. The essence of the scientific concept and our social concept (Resolution on family planning of 1969, Constitution of 1974) is a free, conscious and responsible family.

12- Insistence on the limitation of births through the pill, abortions and sterilization, with the aim of reducing the population increase and thus solving the economic and social problems is a neo-Malthusian view, against which Yugoslav society has struggled persistently during the last 30 years in the international arena, too. Regrettably, however, this view prevails today in regard to Kosova and the Albanians. But what can be said about the exaggerated claims of the Southern Slavs that the Albanians' birth rate must be reduced in order to adjust the national structure of the population in favour of Serbs, Macedonians and Montenegrins, or about the statement that it is useless to invest in Kosova without the presence of Serbs?

13- The reproduction and development of the population are social-historical processes and "different ways of reproduction of population respond to different modes of social production" (A.Wertemer, 1986). Kosova is in Europe, while the Albanians of Yugoslavia are the most undeveloped part of the European population, hence the problem of reducing their birth rate can be solved only in the ways in which Europe and the developed zones of Yugoslavia have



proceeded during the last 100 years. The demands for the implementation of measures of the Indian and Chinese type with the elements of compulsion for reducing the birth rate are inapplicable in a European socialist society. All the countries and peoples of our continent have accepted the control of births in marriage and have reduced the birth rate and the size of families, not as a result of measures of social and political pressure on individuals and couples, but through development, and in the first place, through the social and cultural emancipation of women. Instead of examining with a critical eye the concessions and mistakes in regard to the belated and tortuous development of Albanians (who amount to about 2,050,000 today), especially during the two first post-war decades, Serbia and Yugoslavia blame this nationality for its high birth rate.

14- The reproductive consciousness in the sense of a rational reproduction of population is determined by the material basis as well as by the improved standard of social, urban, educational health services and the infrastructure. It is certain that the authors of reproduction would immediately accept the means and ideas which society offers along with such changes. But as the experience of the population which has gone through the transitional demographic moment shows, without such conditions and premises, the so-called control of births in marriage cannot be accepted, applied and spread. In regard to its effect on certain parts of the population and on the population as a whole, the complicated nature of and the long period required for demographic processes, especially for changing the birth rate and the age structure of the population, must always be borne in mind.

15- It has never occurred in the history of demography that interference by the state in the process of births has yielded any results without consequences to the human will and reason. The compulsory bureaucratic manipulation of society by means of dubious motivations, pressures, the stressing solely of the negative effects of the high birth rate and the politicization of the issue, as well as through the denial of the right to freely decide about the number of children and the spacing of their births as a fundamental human right which our Constitution guarantees, is likely to cause among the authors of reproduction not only an opposing stand, but also long-term conflicts between nationalities, with incalculable socio-political implications in the zones with mixed population. Those subjects of our society who are for the solution of social and national problems in Kosova, Macedonia and elsewhere through the so-called demographic road seem to be totally unaware of these facts.

## II

1- The migrations of population in the modern world have become practically an irresistible process of a quantitative and qualitative evolution of the population in the conditions of pronounced economic, social-professional and demographic differences, both between regions and states, and within these countries. Today migrations constitute a problem with many aspects: geographical, demographic, economic, social and political, and are promoted by complicated factors which are often interconnected. Migrations have become an ever more significant factor of the metamorphosis of movements, the composition and life-style of the population.

2- In the post-war period, migrations of the population were very intensive and massive in all the republics, provinces, regions, communes and villages of Yugoslavia, including all strata of society and members of all nationalities. One of the massive forms of movement of the population within the territory of a republic or region at this period are the migrations from all types of settlements, especially from the villages, towards centres of republics or regions and other large or medium-sized cities. This has been caused on the one hand, by the inadequate living conditions and infrastructure, and first of all, by the agrarian over-population of the



agricultural and pastoral zones and on the other hand, by the powerful process of industrialization of some zones, the development of cities, education, communication, etc. According to the 1981 census, the number of people who have shifted from their birth-place reached 9.184.451, or 41.0 per cent of the total population of the country. The undeveloped zones are almost always the first to be abandoned, and the population of the developed zones is continually increased with newcomers. Certain directions of population movement have already become traditional.

3- The shifts of population between republics, republics - provinces and between provinces are always intensive and include 1.760.333 inhabitants (1981), mainly of those communities which are remote from "mother territories". When they cross republican or provincial borders, population groups of every nationality almost always head for zones where, although geographically more remote from their mother population, they are closer to other groups which have the same or similar language, religion, customs, culture and other ethnic features, especially if the zone to which they move offers more from the material, social and cultural standpoints. The studies conducted hitherto have shown also, that the population of the one nationality is more mobile, from the geographical and social viewpoints if it has settled in a developed zone, and less mobile if it lives in an undeveloped zone.

4- The developed regions and the big urban centres have great powers of attractions over a radius of up to 400 km as in the case of Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Novi-Sad, Prishtina, etc. In most instances, movements over longer distances are usually undertaken by people of nationalities which have a longer urban tradition. That is how the nuclei and zones of national concentrations are created. The Serbs from all zones, and first of all from Bosnia-Hercegovina, Croatia and Kosova, move towards Serbia and Belgrade, Vojvodina and Novi-Sad; the Croats from Bosnia-Hercegovina and Serbia towards Croatia and Zagreb; the Moslems of Serbia, Montenegro, Kosova and Macedonia towards Bosnia-Hercegovina and Sarajevo; while the Albanians of Macedonia, Montenegro and Southern Serbia towards Kosova and Prishtina. For the members of the national minority settled in the zone of the nationality that constitutes the majority, for example the Albanians in Belgrade, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Zagreb, or the Moslems in the Slovenian cities, etc., in order to avoid complete assimilation in environments with different languages, cultures and social developments, the opening of schools in their mother tongue must be considered and efforts made to preserve their national identity.

5- Bosnia-Hercegovina is the zone with the greatest emigration in Yugoslavia. According to the 1981 census its loss of population to the other republics and regions was 397.272 inhabitants. With the developed zones it has the following negative balance of migration: Croatia (182.346), Vojvodina (125.910), Serbia without the provinces (72.971), Slovenia (28.200). Serbia without the provinces has the country's greatest immigration. For this reason, as well as for the subject under discussion, this part of the country deserves greater attention. According to the 1981 census, 637.399 inhabitants from other republics and the provinces as well as from the outside world settled in this zone. The biggest contingent of them - 144.075 or 22.6 per cent of the total, came from Vojvodina followed by that from Bosnia-Hercegovina - 111.828 or 17.5 per cent, from Croatia - 110.704 or 17.3 per cent, from Kosova - 110.675 or 17.3 per cent, from Macedonia - 50.011 or 7.8 per cent, from Montenegro - 42.755 or 6.7 per cent, from the outside world 24.299 or 3.8 per cent, and from unspecified places - 30.066 or 4.7 per cent. As to the period of their arrival, the greatest immigration into Serbia has occurred since the 1960's. In the period 1961-1981, 363.239 people or 56.8 per cent of the total number of immigrants have settled there. In the period 1976-1981 alone 101.502 people or 15.9 per cent of the total immigrated there. Likewise more people have shifted from Kosova to Serbia since 1961: in the period 1961-1970 - 34.227; 1971-1975 - 22.792; and in 1976-1981 - 28.617 inhabitants, while we shall speak about the migrations since 1981 later.

6- The region of Belgrade has attracted most of the immigrants. It has absorbed 404.394



inhabitants from the other republics and the provinces accounting for 63.4 per cent of the total number of immigrants to this republic. The largest contingent has come from Vojvodina (104 046), followed by Croatia (90.517), Bosnia-Herzegovina (75.191), then from Kosova (41.955), Macedonia (27.260), Montenegro (23.965), Slovenia (8.502), from the outside world (16.620) and unspecified (16.298). Of the total immigrants to Serbia (without the provinces), the following percentages of them have settled in the Belgrade region: those from Croatia 81.7 per cent, from Vojvodina - 72.2 per cent, from Bosnia - Herzegovina - 67.2 per cent, from Slovenia - 65.9 per cent, from Montenegro - 56.0 per cent, from Macedonia 54.5 per cent, from Kosova - 37.9 per cent (as well as 16.3 per cent in the region of Sumadija and Pomoravlje, 15.3 per cent in Kraljeva region, 9.8 per cent in Podunava region, 9.5 per cent in Nis region, etc.), from outside Yugoslavia 68.3 per cent and from unknown regions 54.2 per cent.

7- The migrations within Serbia itself are even more intensive. According to the 1981 census the number of the population that has changed its place of residence amounts to 1.753.116 or almost 1/3 of the population of Serbia (from one place to another within the commune 819.335, and from one commune of Serbia to another 1.943.781). The grave problem has emerged of the abandonment of the countryside (from 1953-1981 the demographic balance shows a loss of 578.200 rural inhabitants) and farms (from 1953-1981 the population engaged in farming diminished by 687.000 inhabitants) and the so-called demographic ruin of the Serbian village - depopulation, ageing, upsetting of the main demographic structure and in the not-distant future, the demise of a significant number of rural settlements. The shift away from an agrarian economy transferred both biological and social and economic reproduction from the countryside to the city. A great number of social changes, changes within the family, with very great negative consequences have occurred in the villages of the hilly and mountainous zones. The vital force of the rural population of Serbia has declined: the birth rate dropped from 27.2 per thousand in 1953 to 5.8 per thousand in 1981, the overall death rate increased from 12.3 to 16.2 per thousand, while natural increase fell from 14.4 per thousand in 1953 to 10.4 per thousand in 1981 (S.Livada, 1988). Such a negative trend in the reproduction of population, a trend which cannot be reversed, is typical not only of Serbia, but also of Croatia, Slovenia, Vojvodina and Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the other hand, we see an excessive and uncontrolled concentration of the population in towns where major problems are developing in all sectors of urban development. The urban life-style has not developed equally in all parts of the cities of our country, which means that the qualitative part of this process does not include all the social structures, or all the nationalities in towns of mixed national composition. All this shows that an erroneous policy of regional, territorial and urban planning policy has been followed for a long time in Serbia, and not only there.

8- In the early 80s, demographic problems of nations and nationalities, especially the problem of shifts of population, have become very acute in the social and political aspect. Migrations have become a delicate field and a political fact precisely because the fear exists that with the crossing of provincial and republican borders the ratios in the structure of population will change. On the one hand, in some zones we have the homogenization of the national composition through the migrating component, while on the other hand, we have the heterogenization of some zones also due to shifts of population which result from employment, schooling, marriage links, etc. Serbia is interested mostly in the territorial political aspect of this question. It sees the danger from the national homogenization of Kosova (77.4 per cent Albanians in 1981) in the increase of the number of Albanian population and the departure of Serbs from this province, but it also fears the decline in the numbers of Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Sandjak region, Southern Serbia, etc. On this basis it succeeded in imposing on Yugoslavia its theses about the creation of an "ethnically pure Kosova", "the Albanianization of Kosova", "a second Albania in Serbia", "a Greater Albania", etc., alleging that these are aims pursued from the time of the League of Prizren (1878)



and the Bujan Conference (1944).

9- Macedonia seems to see an even greater threat in the number of Albanians (377.726 or 19.8 per cent of the total population of the republic in 1981 and 6.7 per cent of the work force), and in these last 8 years it has stressed the question of the high birth rate of the Albanians and their "mass" exodus from Kosova to its territory, allegedly because of aggressive Albanian nationalism. So the shifting of Albanians to Macedonia has been strictly prohibited, while against the Albanian population there a number of restrictive measures have been taken in the field of education, the public use of the mother tongue, employment, the number of children, etc. Any elementary human constitutional demand of the Albanians is described as counter-revolutionary.

The "flood" of Albanians from Kosova into Macedonia has been cunningly presented as an attack of Kosova and the Albanians on Macedonia. The official policy of Macedonia interprets this "wave of migration" and the high birth rate of Albanians as an alleged aim of that nationality synthesized in the idea of the creation of "a second Kosova in Macedonia", "of a second Albania in Macedonia" and "of Greater Albania". Since 1981 there has been continual harping on the theme that over 15,000 Albanians from Kosova have come to the commune of Tetova alone. However, according to the 1981 census, the number of people from Kosova who have settled anywhere in Macedonia during all periods totals only 21.245. The biggest influx took place in the period 1946-1970, while from June 1, 1983 to December 31, 1987, according to official figures, a total of 1,043 persons have come to Macedonia from Kosova. In the 50s and 60s, when the intensive shifting of Albanians to Turkey took place and Shkup, the capital of Macedonia, was a transit station, this republic attracted the Albanians. There they changed their nationality to Turkish, received their passports and visas, and the competent organs worked day and night for this purpose. At a time when efforts to restrict the elementary human and constitutional rights of Albanians in Macedonia are being expanded, that republic cannot accept Albanians but only sends them on. The exodus of Albanians from Macedonia to the USA, Turkey, Australia and Kosova is intensive. The purpose of this pressure is to remove the Albanian population from this republic.

10- Any demographic extension of Albanians towards southern Serbia, central Macedonia and Titograd is explained as "extension of the nationalist map of Greater Albania" (S.Suvar, 1981). On the other hand, the Albanians are continually accused of shutting themselves up in ethnic, cultural and social ghettos. In the 1980's the settling of Albanians in Serbian or mixed Serbian-Albanian villages in Kosova has been strictly prohibited. On the insistence of I.Stambolic, head of the Serbian state, an Albanian family of ten members was expelled from Batusim village, near Prishtina, after their house was destroyed in front of the TV cameras. While on the insistence of D.Pavlovic, head of the party organization of Belgrade, no Albanian was employed in the newly built factory in that same village. These are permanent monuments of segregation that the representatives of the Serbian government and party have erected.

11- Kosova, too, is a zone with marked immigration and emigration. In order to make a correct interpretation and to understand the structure of the population of this province, especially of certain parts of it, as well as of some current development of the movement of the population, our analysis must cover a long period, at least 100 years, from the Serbo-Turkish wars of 1876-1878 to day. This is the period of large movements into Kosova and large emigrations of certain national or religious groups from its territory for specific national-political reasons. After 1878, with the aim of creating an ethnically pure state, the Serbian government expelled all the Albanians from 504 villages and several towns in the regions of Nis, Prokuplje and Vranja, but a number of Serbs also emigrated from Kosova to Serbia. These migrants, known as muhajirs, settled on the outskirts of other villages in Kosova or created new villages.

12- The period between the two world wars is noted for the settlement of colonists from



the Serbian population of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Lika, Dalmatia, etc., in the context of the notorious agrarian reform, the purpose of which was not the elimination of remnants of feudal relations and the solution of social and economic problems, but the deportation en masse of Albanians to Turkey and Albania, in order to create an ethnically pure territory, or the "Serbization of Kosova" (M.Obradovic, 1981). The land was taken mainly from poor Albanians and over 200,000 hectares were divided not only among colonists but also among big farms, agricultural schools, churches and monasteries, the army, the gendarmes, commune clerks, cetniks, bandits etc. In this way about 240,000 Albanians from all over Yugoslavia were removed (H.Bajrami, 1981), and about 65,000 Serbian colonists were settled in Kosova. However, the ruling circles were not satisfied with the results of the settlement of Serbs and the removal of Albanians, so they demanded the expulsion of all Albanians with brutal means, including the burning of their villages and city quarters, as Serbia had done after 1878. A number of institutions and individuals were employed for this purpose, but the most outstanding were the Serbian Cultural Club (1937) and Vasa Cubrilovic, who in 1937 drafted the program known as "The expulsion of Arnauts", which served as a basis for the preparation of the agreement on the convention between the Yugoslav and Turkish governments for the deportation of all Albanians from Old Yugoslavia. However, as the circumstances made the ratification of this convention and the expulsion of all Albanians impossible, Cubrilovic, immediately after the liberation of Belgrade, to be more precise, on November 3, 1944, brought out another program in which in an even more fascist way he demanded the purging of Yugoslavia not only of the Albanians, but also of all its other national minorities such as the Germans, Hungarians, Italians and Rumanians. The idea of ethnically pure territories is thus quite old and has its origin in the cultural and political circles of Serbia. In the new Yugoslavia, however, Cubrilovic was appointed minister in charge of several departments while in 1987, on the occasion of his 90th birthday, the Presidency of the SFRY (Sinan Hasani chairman) decorated him with the Order of the Yugoslav Star!

13- The period after the Second World War has been characterized by migrations of the population within Kosova, in the direction of Kosova, and from Kosova. With the emergence of differences in the development of various regions, in the 1960's and 70's the population of the province, which had long been tied to home, family and birth-place, became increasingly involved in the geographical and social movements within its territory. According to the 1981 census 474,213 persons or 29.9 per cent of the total population of the province had left their birth-place (Yugoslavia 41.0 per cent, Slovenia 47.2 per cent). Half of these movements are local migrations (within the commune), 37.5 per cent are movements of Kosovars from one commune to the other, 10.6 per cent are from other republics and Vojvodina and 0.7 per cent from other countries (3,331). A total of 1,543 persons have come from Albania, of whom, according to reports from the Secretariat of Internal Affairs, only 704 remained. The figure of 300,000 Albanian emigrants in the province, which has been mentioned at the rallies of Serbs and Montenegrins and in political forums, is a lie, exaggerating the number of Albanians 426 fold!

14- The movement from the countryside to town is predominant in the process of the movement of the population within Kosova. This can be seen from the fact that the population has diminished in a large number of villages (410 villages in the period 1971-1981), while the population of cities and centres of communes is constantly growing (the percentage of the population in centres with over 15,000 inhabitants increased from 11.8 per cent in 1948 to 24.7 per cent in 1981). The causes of internal movements lie first of all in the agrarian overpopulation and the lack of urban infrastructure systems, schools and social amenities. Migrations from village to village, with the population leaving the hilly and mountainous zones to settle in villages of the plains and around cities, where the possibilities of earning a living are better, are very frequent, too. A good part of these movements are linked with



marriages. Parallel with the mass exodus from rural areas, there is also a marked shift of the population engaged in farming to non-farming pursuits, through changes of occupation, the schooling of the younger generation, as well as directly with no change in schooling of professional position.

15- In the first post-war years, large number of Serbs and Montenegrins from both the surrounding regions and the more remote zones of Serbia and Montenegro came to Kosova as cadres, bringing their families with them. In the main they were employed in social, administrative and cultural institutions, in banks, administrations, trade, services, various enterprises, the organs of communes, houses of culture, the health service, etc. In regard to their level of schooling, in the main they had completed primary or secondary schooling, while most of them gained the necessary qualification in the course of work, by attending the so-called night schools and various courses. The immigration of the population from these nationalities is generally known as the second "colonization" of Kosova.

16- Up to the 4th Plenum held at Brioni in 1966, there were only a few people outside Kosova, Serbia and Macedonia who knew about the mass deportations of Albanians and others to Turkey as a continuation of the pre-war emigration. It is estimated that 246,108 persons have been deported from Yugoslavia to Turkey since the war (P.Nushi, 1978). This was done without the knowledge of the other parts of the country or the world at large, while the motives were the same as those of the pre-war period, except that they had been modified and adapted to suit the new conditions of the socialist order. This was the concrete implementation of the 1944 program V.Cubrilovic entitled "The problem of minorities in the new Yugoslavia" and of the carefully prepared plans of the Great Serbs. Along with the maltreatment of innocent peasants and the few intellectuals and teachers (including murder in many cases), other means of direct pressure for the expulsion of Albanians were: compelling them to declare themselves of Turkish nationality, the action for the collection of weapons because the Albanians were allegedly preparing for armed insurrection in order to unite with Albania, the Prizren trial, the invention of secret "irredentist" political organizations, the restriction of the right to use the mother tongue and national symbols, the closure of the Albanological Institute and schools in the Albanian language, raising the Albanian flag on national holidays by the security organs with the aim of arresting innocent persons, etc. Due to the "influence" of international circumstances and, first of all, the protests of Albanian emigrants to UNO, the surge of expulsions to Turkey was quelled before the 4th Plenum in 1966. The party program which had been laid down in the late 1950's also influenced the improvement of the position of the nationality and stopping the emigration of Albanians and others to Turkey. "In the eyes of the world, socialist Yugoslavia could no longer fight for an exclusively Serbian cause such as the revival of Serbian Kosova" (Sh.Maliqi, 1986).

17- After the 4th Plenum, held at Brioni in 1966, Serbs, Montenegrins, Albanians and Moslems began to leave Kosova. At the same time and especially after the 70s, and following the opening of the University of Prishtina, Albanians, Moslems and others, from different parts of the country, mainly Albanians from Macedonia, the south of Serbia and Montenegro, began to come to Kosova. It is not true that the Serbs and the Montenegrins began to leave Kosova after the constitutional amendments of 1968, and especially after the Constitution of 1974. The process of emigration started immediately after the 4th Plenum of Brioni. After this plenum the process of the national and cultural emancipation of the Albanians and their equal treatment with the Serbs and Montenegrins in all fields of life and work was invigorated. Thus, the positive effects of that plenum were felt in Kosova and among the Albanians more strongly than anywhere else. Some Serbs and Montenegrins, officials in the state and political apparatus, leading cadres in the economy and other social sectors, began to leave Kosova, partly because of the insecurity they felt as a result of the injustices they had perpetrated against Albanian citizens and workers, and partly because they could not tolerate their equality with the Albanians and had



now lost the privileges they had enjoyed before 1966. It should be pointed out that a considerable number of the settlers from these nationalities were of colonial origin, dating from the periods of colonization before and after the war. On the other hand, the differences in the levels of development of Kosova and Serbia and the other regions of the country are becoming ever more marked, and so, unable to find jobs in Kosova, people are going to the more developed regions of Serbia, Slovenia and elsewhere. But movements for family, personal, or other reasons are a common phenomenon for all, irrespective of nationality or religion. Third, besides Belgrade and other big cities, Serbia has a number of other important economic and cultural urban centres in the southern part of the Republic (Titovo-Uzice, Cacak, Kraljevo, Krusevac, Aleksinac, Prokuplje, Kurshumlija, Leskovac, Vranja, etc.). Bearing in mind the proximity of these centres, in the context of the intense migrations from countryside to city, it is not surprising that when the Serbian population of Kosova decides to leave the countryside, it settles directly in these Serbian towns and only a negligible number settle in the towns of Kosova. Something similar occurs with the Albanians, who, when they leave their villages in southern Serbia, Macedonia or Montenegro, settle directly in the big towns of Kosova, especially Prishtina.

The Serbian peasant who moves, sells his property in Kosova at a very high price and can buy a house with a garden, agricultural land and machinery (usually on the outskirts of Serbian cities) at prices much below what he got for his property in Kosova, thus saving considerable amounts of money. The Serbs who have been living in the cities of Kosova for a long time usually settle in big urban centres in the interior of Serbia, mainly in Belgrade or its environs, as they are offered much more favourable living and working conditions there.

18- The political circles of Serbia and Yugoslavia explain the shifting of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova, which continues to this day, with the "pressure" which the Albanians exert against them allegedly to create an "ethnically pure Kosova" and for the "Albanianization of Kosova". This is not new. It is simply political palaver. Unaware of the political ulterior motive of this thesis and the nature of the process of migration, the clumsy and uneducated leadership readily accepted the opinion of Serbia that, as long as there is a single Serb or Montenegrin leaving Kosova, the situation cannot be considered normal. But, as we pointed out above, the Serbs are leaving not only from Kosova but from all the other regions of the country, for the urban centres of Serbia and Vojvodina. Thus, the question arises: Is it irredentism which compels them to do this?! "Their distrust of Albanians and the distortions in their stands towards them, the Serbian nationalists have explained to the Serbian and Montenegrin masses, as defence of the Serbian and Montenegrin people in Kosova and Metohija, while insisting on their citizenship and on their duty to protect Kosova from the Albanians. In this context the organs of state security have explained the economic emigration of Serbs from Kosova as a result of the pressure of the Albanians, who at this period were, in fact, under heavy pressure from precisely these organs" (H.Hoxha, 1982). The real situation does not correspond with the view that the Serbs and Montenegrins leave Kosova on account of pressure from Albanians. Apparently the words "pressure" and "discrimination" have become too gentle because recently they have been replaced with the terms "terror", "genocide", "fascism", "annihilation", etc. The daily use of such very harsh words in political terminology is a very grave matter. It is insulting to the Albanian people, because it is an attempt to present them as genetically prone to commit anti-social acts and crimes, but fortunately, there are no facts to back the abusive words. The Albanians have now been proclaimed permanently to blame for everything, a suspect nation in Yugoslavia, while a new category of "honest Albanians" has been invented.

19- The claim that the Serbs have suffered discrimination in employment in the social sector since the 1970's, and especially beginning from the introduction of the bilingual requirement in those positions where this is essential, is without foundation. On the contrary,



in this period and to this day the absolute number of Serbs employed in the social sector has increased steadily: in 1970 - 32,739; in 1980 - 45,183 and in 1986 - 48,429 (an increase of 47,9 per cent in the period 1970-1986). In 1971 the percentage of the employed population among the Serbs was 14.3 per cent, among the Montenegrins 22.7 per cent, while among the Albanians and the Turks 5.8 and 5.0 per cent respectively (7.8 per cent for the whole province). In 1981 this percentage had increased for all, but much more among the Montenegrins (27.5) and Serbs (21.5) than among the Albanians (9.3) and Turks (17.9) and the average for the province of 11.1 per cent. In 1971 the ratio of persons employed in the social sector was as follows: one in 4.3 Montenegrins, one in 6.9 Serbs, one in 9.4 Turks and one in 16.7 Albanians (the average of the region was one in 12.6). In 1981 this ratio was 1 in 3.6 Montenegrins, one in 4.5 Serbs, one in 5.5 Turks, one in 10.7 Albanians, and one in 11.5 Moslems (the average for Kosova one in 8.9). The Serbs and Montenegrins are employed mainly in social activities, in administrations, directorates, banking and accounting, social security and the health service, in labour offices, in management personnel, in commerce, services, transport, hotels and other secondary sectors. The percentage of them in these fields, mainly the third and fourth sectors, is much higher than the average for the province, while in the primary sectors, (agriculture) and employment abroad, this percentage is much below the average. The Albanians are employed mainly in the primary sectors with low productivity or outside the province (in other countries or parts of Yugoslavia), while in the secondary and especially in the third and fourth sectors, the percentage of them is much lower than the average for Kosova, despite the fact that they make up the majority of the population.

20- The Serbs and Montenegrins are among the nationalities with the highest percentage of urban population in Kosova. In 1961, 36,3 per cent of the Montenegrins and 20,3 per cent of the Serbs lived in towns, while in 1981 this percentage had risen to 70,0 per cent for the Montenegrins and 38,1 per cent for the Serbs. The Albanians are the nationality with the lowest percentage in towns: in 1961 this percentage was 16,7 while in 1981 it had risen to 28,9 per cent (the average for the province was 19,7 and 32,4 per cent respectively). Unlike the Serbs and Montenegrins who live in the centres of cities and mainly in state owned apartments, leading a true urban life, the Albanians are concentrated on the outskirts of cities, mostly in private houses and frequently without the elementary facilities of a city house, thus leading a "peasant" way of life. In the context of the urbanization of Prishtina, according to the census of 1981, of the 8,075 state-owned apartments (1/3 of the total of the province), 3,334 or 41 per cent were occupied by Albanians (who made up 70,1 per cent of the population of the city), 3,055 or 38 per cent were inhabited by Serbs (who made up 15,6 per cent of the population of the city), 903 or 11 per cent by Montenegrins (who made up 3,8 per cent of the population), 271 or 3 per cent by Moslems (2,3 per cent of the population), 129 or 2 per cent by Turks (1,7 per cent of the population), 54 or 1 per cent by gypsies (4,7 per cent of the population), 8,9 or 1 per cent by Yugoslavs (0,4 per cent of the population) and 237 or 3 per cent by others (1,4 per cent of the population of the city). In occupancy of state apartments, the Montenegrins (84,7 per cent) come first, followed by the Yugoslavs (82,7 per cent), the Serbs (70,3 per cent), and Moslems (60,5 per cent), with the Albanians (26,9 per cent), and Turks (35,9 per cent) at the bottom of the list. (Sociological study of the city of Prishtina, Institute of Economy, Prishtina 1986).

21- Since 1981, on the basis of the decision of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosova, beginning from June 1, 1983, the Provincial Secretariat for Internal Affairs and the provincial organ of statistics, have organized the registration of all movements of people away from Kosova to the other republics and Vojvodina and all movements from the other republics and Vojvodina to Kosova. The evidence is authentic. The information is collected on the basis of many characteristics: nationality, sex, age, activity, occupation and employment, level of schooling and vocational training, the reasons for moving, the commune and region in which emigrants will settle, etc. It is difficult



to collect such data even with studies based on penetrating questionnaires; their great value lies in the fact that each individual is asked why he is migrating. Since it is the state which collects them, the data are for internal use. According to these data, from mid-June 1983 to December 31, 1987, 34,251 persons left Kosova and 11,942 others arrived there, which means that the migration balance is negative, with a loss of 23,309 inhabitants. But these figures, especially those on the persons who have shifted from Kosova, have been heavily adjusted during their presentation, even by the highest party and state forums. For example at the meeting of the presidiums of the CC of the LCY and the Provincial Committee of the LC of Kosova held on October 12, 1988 in Prishtina, the chairwoman, Katjusha Jashari, gave the accurate figure of 25,661 Serbs and Montenegrins who have left the province since 1981, while at this same meeting the secretary of the CC of the LC of Serbia, Sokolovic, said that 31,000 Serbs and Montenegrins have left Kosova during the same period. A difference of 5,339 persons !

22- Authentic evidence from emigrants and immigrants reveals motives quite different from those which daily policy and the mass media present. In fact the citizens of all nationalities declare that they leave, first of all, for economic reasons, among which employment predominates, while the percentage of people who left for this reason in the period 1983 to 1987 varies from 47.0 per cent among the Serbs to 73.6 per cent among the Albanians; the percentage of people who left for this reason in the period 1983 to 1987 varies from 47.0 per cent among the Serbs to 73.6 per cent among the Albanians; the percentage of people who left for family reasons varies from 23.5 per cent among the Albanians to 47.7 per cent among the Serbs; the percentage of people who left on account of schooling is very small, varying from 0.6 per cent among the gypsies to 6.7 per cent among Moslems. From 1983 to 1987, a total of 14 persons (11 Serbs, 2 Montenegrins and one of the "others") have given other reasons, including pressure for leaving Kosova.

23- It is interesting that the predominant motive among the immigrants to Kosova is economic, too, and the percentage of those who come from this motive varies between 57.2 per cent among the Moslems to 37.5 per cent among the gypsies. The percentage of those who came for family reasons varies from 33.3 per cent among the "others" to 60.9 per cent among the gypsies, while the motive of schooling is highest among the Albanians (11.1 per cent), and the lowest among the gypsies (1.3 per cent). It is interesting to note that in the official reports of the organs which inform the Secretariat of Internal Affairs about the departure to Kosova of persons from other regions, in general "other reasons", i.e. pressure, does not figure at all. That is why there are no facts and names recorded in regard to this.

24- Examination of the motives of both immigrants and emigrants shows that the same reasons apply to the population of all nationalities. Here we are referring to the free movement of people for economic, family, educational and personal reasons, while the movement of groups for national reasons towards their mother territories, which is a general characteristic all over the country, must be studied. Likewise more profound sociological and other studies must be done on departures on account of the psychosis of fear and other so-called invisible motives, the existence of which cannot be denied. In the context of political and social developments in Yugoslavia, neither the political bureaucracy nor the national leaders can escape the responsibility for this.

25- It is an interesting fact that all the social and political organs of Kosova, Serbia and Yugoslavia are concerned about the departure of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova, while the departure of others, first of all of the Albanians, does not interest any of them. In regard to immigration to Kosova, likewise, the whole society is interested in the coming of Serbs and Montenegrins only, approving objectives which are known in advance to be unrealisable, while nobody worries his head about the motives that prompt Albanians to come to Kosova from other regions. So not one person in Serbia has been jailed even for a single day for maltreatment of Albanians, whose shops have been wrecked (267 cases in the period



1984-1987) and their services boycotted. No one expresses concern over the fact that the Albanians are leaving Macedonia for Turkey to settle there permanently, that they are leaving Macedonia and Montenegro for the USA, or that they are leaving Kosova and other parts of Yugoslavia for the more developed countries of Europe. According to figures from the Association for Endangered Peoples (Gesellschaft fur bedrohte Volker) in Gottingen, in the last 15 years, 250,000 Albanian emigrants have left their homes (100,000 for West Germany, 60,000 for Switzerland, 40,000 for other western countries and 50,000 for the northern parts of Yugoslavia) for economic and political reasons.

26- Serbs and Montenegrins are offered many incentives to settle in Kosova: preference in securing good well-paid jobs, and apartments, free house-building sections, interest-free, long-term loans, etc. In the context of the Yugoslav program of aid for Kosova the policy of sending "brains" is recommended. While up to now these have all been policemen or judges. On the other hand, the policy of employing Albanians as "slaves" in other parts of Yugoslavia in jobs which local workers refuse (just as abroad) where the pay is low, which demand great physical strength and have long-term negative effects on their physical condition and lives, is supported and applied. These jobs are mainly in heavy industry, metallurgy, construction, mines, communal services (street sweepers), etc. In the context of the Yugoslav program concrete plans of development are drafted for the communes with mixed populations, which means only for the Serbs and Montenegrins. Beginning from 1987 several communes have been set up for them (Zubin Potok, Strpce and Stimlje with others under way), in which industrial projects have been built immediately. In the commune of Malisevo, however, the only new commune in which Albanians predominate, no industrial project has been established since it was founded in 1985. And we could go on with other examples of segregation with very harmful economic and political consequences.

27- Classes with only 2-10 pupils are opened for Serbian, Montenegrins and Turkish pupils and the number of these so-called micro-classes totals about 500, while in the faculty of medicine and other preferred branches, more students than the numbers envisaged are admitted, some of them without having sat the competitive entrance examination. Beginning from 1988, children of the Serbian and Montenegrin nationalities have classes in the primary and secondary schools only in the morning, while Albanian children have their classes in the afternoon. The Serbian children and their parents issued the ultimatum that if the Albanian pupils were not removed from the common schools, they would leave Kosova, and this demand has been fulfilled: the Albanian primary school children have their lessons in private houses (Prishulja, Vucitern commune). They also demand the changing of the names of mixed schools which bear the names of famous fighters of the province, Albanian illuminists and humanists. Everything is done on the insistence of Serbian and Montenegrin leaders in Kosova and outside it, while the careerist bureaucracy of the communes accepts their demands immediately. And the Yugoslav public blames the Albanians for all these differences.

28- Lynch law methods are being used on an ever larger scale against the Albanians of Kosova and no one thinks about the consequences. There is no wise policy to consider the consequences following from the fact that more than 584,000 Albanians who have been subjected to police repression (for penal offences, contraventions, etc.) since 1981, i.e. an average of 200 Albanians, mainly young people up to 25 years of age, have been arrested each day. These figures refer only to the Albanians of Kosova, because the number of Albanians arrested in Macedonia, Montenegro and Southern Serbia is not known. The laws are applied differently for the same penal offence: for Albanians sanctions are 10 times more severe than for the others. (An Albanian juvenile from the village of Plementi was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for the attempted rape of a Serbian girl, while an adult Serb from Staro Selo was sentenced to only 1 year's imprisonment for the rape of an Albanian girl).

29- Through the slogan of stopping the Serbs and Montenegrins from leaving Kosova,



and treating the province as a special zone, Serbia and many federal forums want to solve all problems at the expense of the vital interests of the Albanians through the proclamation of special laws (on the language, the flag, trade, etc.), paying no heed to the opinion of the Albanians and applying differentiation of an inquisitional character against them. The protest rallies of about half a million Albanians of Kosova in November 1988 were the final warning that things could continue in this way no longer.

#### NOTE

\* Report to the scientific symposium: Kosova-Srbija-Yugoslaviya, held in Lubljana. Taken from *Zbornik: Kosovo-Srbija-Yugoslaviya*, Lubljana 1989, p. 39-66.



## WHO USES VIOLENCE IN KOSOVA AND AGAINST WHOM IS IT DIRECTED ?

Following the events of March-April 1981 in Serbia and other parts of Yugoslavia, a campaign of insults towards the Albanians of Kosova and other regions is being waged, which has hardly a precedent in the present relations between European nations and peoples. In the forums of the LC of Serbia and Serbian state and social organizations, and in the mass rallies of Serbs in August-October 1988, and in many Serbian publication, the Albanians of Kosova and other regions of Yugoslavia have been called "terrorists" and "fascists". They are accused of having persecuted the Serbs since the 19th century and even today are said to be committing genocide against Serbs and Montenegrins.(1) In a speech delivered on September 5, 1988, in a joint meeting of the Presidium of that Republic and the Presidium of the LC of Serbia the former president of the Presidium of the Republic of Serbia, Peter Gracanin, declared that "terror reigns in Kosova", that "the continuous mistreatment and humiliation inflicted on the Serbian minority threatens to turn into a massive settling of accounts and outright national conflicts."(2) Likewise, the decision of the Presidium of the Republic of Serbia to publish a "white book" on Kosova was intended to tell the world "the truth" about the situation of Serbs in Kosova, where they are "threatened physically, humiliated morally and tortured", having remained "without legal and political protection".(3) Likewise, the former minister of information of Serbia, Z.Djorgevic, told the newspaper *Politika* that "the world must be told clearly about the terror which is playing havoc in Kosova."(4)

Compiled in this atmosphere, the book has appeared recently under the title *Kosovo-Past and Present*. It is full of distortions of the past and present history of the Albanians in general and those of Kosova in particular. Among other things, this book deals with "the terror" the Albanians have exercised and are exercising today against the Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosova. In such articles as that of Milja Scepanovic, "The exodus of Serbs and Montenegrins (1878-1988)"(5) or that of Blagoje Nikolic entitled "Anti-Yugoslav separatism relying on 'Motherland Albania'",(6) crimes committed in Kosova by foreign occupiers, by the Ottomans in the 19th century and by the fascist invaders in the years of the Second World War, are being attributed to Albanians. The authors of these articles write about the so-called "crimes", "pressure" and "violence" the Albanians are committing against the Serbs and Montenegrins in Kosova; these are supposed to be the cause of their emigration.

Past history and the present situation of Kosova prove that the Albanians, who for centuries on end suffered under the Ottoman Empire and later, from the years 1912 to 1930 under the Serbian-Montenegrin yoke, have not exerted and to this day are not exerting "violence" against the Serbs and Montenegrins. The opposite is true. Without entering into the history of Serbo-Albanian relations in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, we point out that, in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Albanians have been subjected to successive massacres, under the military administration in 1945, during the reign of the Great-Serb dictatorship headed by Rankovic from 1948 to 1966, and during the suppression of the demonstrations of November 1968, March and April 1981 and February-March of 1989.

In this article we dwell on the policy of violence and terror against Albanians in and after the demonstrations of March-April in 1981, which has been going on in different forms for many years. The Yugoslav leadership replied with thousands of soldiers and militiamen to the legitimate protest of the Albanians in March and April in 1981 against economic and political discrimination towards them, and their demand to declare Kosova Republic and to enjoy equal



rights within the other peoples of the Federation under the Constitution. Apart from those who were killed in the spring of 1981, besides the young men and women who were beaten and tortured in the streets of Prishtina and other towns, in the hostels of the University of Kosova, and in the cells of the UDB, thousands of others, mainly young people, students, pupils and intellectuals of various professions, workers and peasants, were handed long terms of imprisonment. In April and May of 1981, 1 700 people went to jail. Although the Albanians made up only 8 per cent of the population of Yugoslavia in 1981, they comprised 67 per cent of those condemned for political offenses. Trials of Albanians, about 10-15 in a week in 1981, have continued to this day. Up till 1986, the organs of internal affairs issued 1 200 arrest warrants in Kosova each year. In the three years immediately after the 1981 demonstrations (up till 1984), 30 new militia stations were built, along with 7 communication centres with electronic equipment,(7) to keep the main inhabited centres under control. Apart from military forces, at least 30 militiamen were stationed in each village. According to Veselin Djuranovic, former member of the Presidium of the SFR of Yugoslavia, who spoke on November 4, 1986 to the Serbs of Kosova Plain, during the years 1981 to 1986, 12 000 Albanians had received various terms of imprisonment, most of them from 5 to 15 years.(8) During 1987, 470 trials of Albanians were conducted, i.e. more than one per day.(9) According to official figures from Belgrade, during 1988, the Albanians comprised 42.4 per cent of those accused of political crimes in the whole country. In January 1989, *Rilindja* wrote that over 584 000 Albanians, mostly young people up to 25 years of age, had been handled by police organs and courts of justice in the period 1981-1988.(10) Most of them who are still being sentenced are quite young. Even Rahman Morina, the former secretary for internal affairs of the ASP of Kosova, in an interview he gave to the newspaper *Politika* on September 1, 1988, had to admit as "a grave and dangerous mistake" the fact that "drastic measures are taken against young people from 15 to 20 years of age" in Kosova.(11)

The Albanians, who comprise more than 80 per cent of the population of Kosova, are not exercising terror over the Serbian minority, as is being propagated in Yugoslavia. On the contrary, Kosova and its Albanian population for eleven years now are living under savage military-police violence. The army and the militia of Serbia and the Yugoslav Federation make the law in Kosova. The Yugoslav Secretary of Defence, V.Kadijevic, declared in Serbia in October 1988 that "the Yugoslav army has been engaged to the maximum and in every direction in Kosova."(12) Despite the opposition of the leadership of the ASP of Kosova, Belgrade, on the absurd claim that the situation in Kosova "was endangering the security of Yugoslavia", in September 1988 dispatched to the 22 communes of Kosova more special units of the Serbian militia, trained to commit massacres.(13) The representative of Slovenia, Joze Smesmet, had these atrocities in mind when, in a meeting of the Council of Internal policy of the Assembly of the SFR of Yugoslavia, held on December 8, 1988, he pointed out that "the organs of internal affairs are bearing the main brunt of the struggle for the solution of the problems of Kosova. Can it be," he asked, "that the state in Kosova functions only in the sphere of reprisals?"(14) At this meeting, Bozo Kovac, also from Slovenia, said, that, of the Yugoslav programme for Kosova, only those tasks which have to do with the militia and with reprisals are being carried out, while the others are not being accomplished.(15)

In implementing the political platform for Kosova adopted in the 22nd Plenum of the LC of Yugoslavia in November 1981, in the 18th Plenum of the LC of Serbia which was held during the 23th and 24th of December that same year, and in the other forums of the Yugoslav Federation, of Serbia, Macedonia, the retrogressive forces which have gained the upper hand in Yugoslavia and especially in Serbia are putting into practice a complex of measures to attack everything that has to do with the national assertion of Albanians, the Albanian cadres and intelligentsia and especially the achievements of Albanians in the years 1968-1980 in education, culture and science. It is an anti-Constitutional move to deprive the Albanians of the right to



take part in the running of Kosova or communes with Albanian population in Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro and to dismiss Albanian cadres from their different positions. Apart from the main cadres of Kosova, who were dismissed immediately after the events of March-April 1981, thousands of employees of the state administration and the LC in the centre and in the communes, managers of economic enterprises and heads of educational, scientific and cultural institutions have been removed. According to official Yugoslav figures, in the years 1981-1987, in Kosova alone about 5 000 members have been expelled from the LC, while thousands of others have been punished with other measures.(16) Tens of organizations of the LC have been disbanded because they have refused to submit to the so-called "political differentiation". The University of Prishtina, one of the centres of education and culture and the only place where young Albanians can learn in their mother tongue, has been declared a "citadel of nationalism and counter-revolution", and Albanian cadres have been removed from its leading posts and those in the faculties. Likewise, the more outstanding Albanian scientists of the Academy of Sciences and Arts in Kosova have been dismissed from their functions or punished. During 1982 alone, a hundred Albanians were removed from the teaching staffs of the University. Dozens of others are being dismissed each year under various pretexts. During 1986-1988, there have been numerous expulsions from the Faculties of Philosophy and Medicine. The number of Albanian teachers has steadily gone down, and they are being replaced with Serbs and Montenegrins from Belgrade and elsewhere. The purpose of such measures is to reduce the number of Albanian students or, as is being done in recent years, to force them to attend lessons in the Serbo-Croat language, and thus deprive the University of Prishtina of its Albanian profile.

In Macedonia, too, the formation of the Albanian intelligentsia is being hindered by every means. Although the Albanians constitute the second largest nationality in the Republic of Macedonia (more than 800 000 as against 1 200 000 Macedonians), in the University of Shkup there is no faculty in the Albanian language and the way students are enrolled places Albanians in an unequal position in comparison with Macedonians.(17) Thus, the number of Albanian students enrolled in the University of Shkup in 1987-1988 amounted to 175, or only 4 per cent of the total. Meanwhile, at the Pedagogical Academy of Shkup, the only high school which trains teachers, including teachers in the Albanian language, the Albanian students are compelled to take lessons in Macedonian.

A large number of primary and secondary schools teachers in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro have lost their jobs. At a joint meeting of the Presidium of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosova which was held in October 1988, it was admitted that, from 1981, 360 teachers and 1 120 pupils had been removed from the teaching process in Kosova, while 441 teachers had been expelled from the League of Communists,(18) although these figures do not include the hundreds of teachers who were imprisoned during and after the demonstrations of 1981 and tens of others in Macedonia and Montenegro who have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. In 1986, measures were taken against 200 teachers and 842 pupils in Kosova.(19) In February 1988, 130 Albanian teachers of Kosova were not given the licence to work in education. The purpose of the removal of Albanian teachers who are described as "politically unsuitable" is not a secret at all in Yugoslavia. During 1988, a new bill was drafted for the early retirement of Albanian teachers before reaching the age set for all Yugoslav citizens, a bill which gives the state administration the right to dismiss Albanian workers in education *en masse*. The bill aroused the discontent of the Albanian teachers and scientific intelligentsia who described it as a measure contrary to the Yugoslav Constitution and human rights, which discriminates against Albanians and is intended to reduce the number of their schools.(20)

These steps are being taken at a time when for the Serbian schools, Serbian teachers are



being brought from all the Yugoslav republics and guaranteed material privileges. The Serbian pupils also enjoy privileged positions and have special schools and classes, including, as *Rilindja* writes, 502 parallel classes which in Kosova are called "xhuxha" (dwarfs), since they function with only 1-12 Serbian or Montenegrin pupils. (21) This is occurring at a time when, because of the shortage of classrooms and school buildings, Albanian pupils attend schools in three shifts. For this reason, also, thousands of Albanian children of rural Kosova, Montenegro and Macedonia have to travel 10 to 12 miles every day to attend primary school.

In the 1988-1989 school year, the Serbian and Montenegrin pupils have received other privileges. Although a total of only 4 960 Serbian and Montenegrin pupils completed their primary schools, 6 894 places were opened for them in the secondary schools. At the same time, 5 000 Albanian pupils remained unenrolled because there was no place for them. In the University of Prishtina, too, in the 1988-1989 school year, 2 360 Serbian and Montenegrin young men and women were enrolled for the first year, compared with 7 153 Albanian students, (22) although Serbs and Montenegrins comprise less than 15 per cent of the population. After all these figures, there can be no talk of discrimination against Serbs and Montenegrins in education in Kosova, as one finds in the articles of Veljo Tadic ("The educational and cultural transformation of Kosovo") (23) or Milos Misevic ("Continuity in the Albanization of Kosovo"). (24) The facts presented above prove the opposite. The Prishtina RTV was occupied in August 1990 and the Albanian language newspaper "Rilindja" was closed down. The employment of Serbian and Montenegrin functionaries, who do not know the Albanian language, the language of the majority in Kosova, constitutes a flagrant violation of the principle of bilinguality proclaimed in the Constitution; this discriminates against the Albanians, depriving them of the right to use their mother tongue in communication with state organs and leading to the Serbianization of the state administration in which the Serbo-Croat language is becoming more and more dominant. (25) For the same purpose, the Albanian names of schools are being replaced with Serbian names, the memorial plaques and signs of all kinds in the Albanian language are being removed, and there are even demands that the name of the Province should be changed. (26)

Macedonia has abandoned the bilingual principle. Albanians have lost the right to use the Albanian language in the state administration and in all the other institutions of communes with Albanian population - Tetova, Dibra, Gostivar, Kerçova, Struga, Kumanova, five communes of the city of Shkup and elsewhere. (27) In the 1987-1988 school year, the Albanian pupils of the senior classes in the secondary schools in Macedonia were compelled to continue their lessons in the Macedonian language. (28) This measure, which deprives the Albanian pupils of the right to schooling in the mother tongue, is illegal and contrary to the Constitution of the SFR of Yugoslavia and that of Macedonia, which guarantee the right of schooling in the mother tongue. In Yugoslavia, when it comes to dealing with the Albanians, neither the Constitution nor the laws which result from it are respected, because the Albanians have long been rated as second-class citizens. The state organs of Macedonia are dismissing and imprisoning the Albanian teachers who oppose the closing of the Albanian schools and who dare to communicate with their pupils in their mother tongue and demand the application of bilinguality. In 1988, hundreds of Albanian pupils from the secondary schools of Kumanova, Tetova, Gostivar, Shkup and other regions were excluded from the schools of Yugoslavia because they refused to continue their schooling in the Macedonian language. (29) In August 1988, the Macedonian police of Kumanova violently suppressed the demonstrations of 600 Albanian children and their parents who were protesting against the elimination of teaching in their Albanian mother tongue. (30) On September 3, 1988, the Presidium of the Republic of Macedonia called this legitimate demand "a counter-revolutionary demonstration to overturn the intra-national relations in this Republic and destabilize Yugoslavia and Macedonia", for otherwise the arrest and imprisonment of 128 Albanians who took part in this demonstration



could not have been justified. (31)

Today in Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro, most of the text-books dealing with Albanian language, literature and history which have been compiled by outstanding Albanian scientists of Kosova and Macedonia have been withdrawn from use. This also disregards the principle of the equality of peoples. The Albanian pupils of Kosova, Macedonia, etc. have been deprived of the possibility of studying the works of the founders of Albanian literature of the Renaissance and the present-day Albanian literature.(32) Albanian and other intellectuals cannot understand what harm could come to Serbia or Yugoslavia or how they could be destabilized by such poems as Luigj Gurakuqi's "A Bunch of Flowers", or Aleks Caci's "The Farmer", Naim Frasheri's "Our Language" and Cajupi's "The Albanian", or from the works "The General of the Dead Army" by Ismail Kadare, the poems "Work" by Asdren, "A Bunch of Flowers" by Mark Krasniqi, "Skanderbeg" by Anton Berisha and scores of verses, stories and other literary works which have been removed from the school curricula during the last two years.(33) The scientists of Kosova do not have the right to publish their works which deal with Albanian historical and cultural heritage. Studies which prove the Illyrian-Albanian continuity, publications about Albanian autochthony or onomastics, Skanderbeg and the League of Prizren have been especially curtailed. This has not been done to protect them against the so-called Albanian nationalism or irredentism, which is a fabrication of these retrogressive forces in Serbia and Yugoslavia and who are attacking everything Albanian: language, the literature, history and the whole national culture. In 1988 a scientific institute for the study of the Serbo-Croat cultural heritage in the Serbo-Croat language was founded in Kosova and it has been proposed to open at the University of Prishtina the chair of the Turkish language which, according to the Yugoslav press, would affirm the Turkish nationality in Kosova, which according to the statistics of 1981 does not exceed 12 000 persons.(34) These are just measures because they are assisting the culture of other nationalities of Kosova, regardless of their numerical weight. However, other proposals of the Serbian academicians and professors to close the Albanological Institute of Prishtina and turn the University of Kosova (35) into a regular Serbian institution can only be considered another attack on Albanian culture.

The facts prove that the declarations made for years in Yugoslavia about the so-called "violence" of the Albanians and the allegations that they had forced 22 000 or 30 000(36) Serbs and Montenegrins to leave since the year 1981 do not correspond to the truth. The attempt to present this emigration "as an attack by Albanians on the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia" and even "as a threat to peace in the Balkans and Europe"(37) is likewise quite absurd. According to Yugoslav statistics, the emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova and those of other peoples of Yugoslavia are a normal movement of population. From the post-war census to 1981, about 9 million persons have changed their residence in Yugoslavia. Meanwhile since 1981, a total of 1.7 million citizens of all nationalities have shifted to other republics or districts. Of the latter, more than 858 000 have been Serbs. From Bosnia and Hercegovina alone, 266 000 Serbs have gone to Serbia.(38) Considering these facts, the great ado being made for several years now about the 22 000 or 30 000 Serbs and Montenegrins who have emigrated from Kosova, and the political hue given to this process to arouse millions of people and involve them in demonstrations is nothing but an attempt to incite the hatred of the Serbs and other nationalities against the Albanians.

Statistical data prove that to this day there are more Albanians than Serbs or Montenegrins who have moved in large numbers from Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro, both because of the policy of discrimination pursued against them and for economic reasons. While the Serbs go to the Republic of Serbia where they find better working and living conditions, the Albanians migrate to all parts where, as the TANJUG agency admits, there are at least 200 000 Albanian workers today.(39) According to figures from the Yugoslav press, 9 792 Albanians from Lipjan, Prizren and Prishtina are working in Zagreb. From the Republic of



Macedonia, 10 493 persons, mostly from Tetova and Gostivar, have emigrated to Croatia.(40) Meanwhile, the number of Albanians departing as economic emigrants, temporarily or permanently to Western Europe, USA or Australia exceeds 250 000 persons. (41) During the years 1981-1985, 18 000 Albanians emigrated from Montenegro, where the 1981 census put the Albanian population at 37 335. During the last two years in Macedonia, the policy of denationalization and terror, the bulldozing of the walls round their homes in Kumanova, Tetova, Kerçova, Gostivar and elsewhere and the destruction of hundreds of other houses have forced the Albanians to abandon their ancestral territories and emigrate to Turkey, USA and Western Europe.

The departure of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova and the emigration of the Albanians are serious problems linked with the general economic and political crisis which has engulfed the whole of Yugoslavia. It is not right that the blame for the "Kosova drama", as the emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova is described in Yugoslavia, should be laid on the Albanians who are allegedly committing "terror" and "rape" against them,(42) or on the PR of Albania. The cause of the "Kosova drama" should be sought in the policy of economic exploitation and political discrimination Belgrade pursues towards Kosova and its population. It is an officially accepted fact, even in Yugoslavia, that Kosova constitutes one of its most backward regions. This fundamental reason explains the number of emigrants, the majority of whom are Albanians, and the others Serbs and Montenegrins. Figures from recent official inquiries in Kosova reveal that, regardless of the influence exercised by the exacerbation of intra-national relations, which are characteristic of all Yugoslavia, the overwhelming majority of Serbs and Montenegrins (80 per cent) have left Kosova for economic, and the remainder, for family reasons.(43) In Serbia and other parts of Yugoslavia, however, some forces are interested in accelerating this process, and, to this end, use all the means of pressure. They send anonymous threats to special institutions and persons, exaggerate ordinary events in the relations between people of different nationalities of Kosova in the press. They organize demonstrations like those of 1987 and 1988 in which hatred for Albanians came out in all its force. This not only affects the national feelings of Albanians but also causes insecurity among Serbians and Montenegrins.

The events of 1988-1989 prove that the propaganda in Yugoslavia about the so-called "genocide" and "terror" by Albanians start from the leadership of Serbia and is nothing but an alibi, a smokescreen to cover up the violence and the policy of national discrimination being exercised against the Albanians in Kosova, Macedonia and other regions. A former member of the Presidium of the LC of Yugoslavia, Marko Orlandic (from Montenegro), in October 1988 described "the protests about the terrorizing of the Serbian and Montenegrin minorities in Kosova by the Albanian majority" as a manipulation of Serbian "extremists".(44) The anti-Albanian campaign coincided with the demonstrations of Serbs and Montenegrins, which began in the summer of 1988 in Kosova Plain and continued on a larger scale in September-October of the same year in Serbia. The slogans of the demonstrators "Death to Albanians!", "Give us arms!", "The army to Kosova!", "Let us go to Prishtina!" or calls for the establishment of iron-fisted rule in Kosova and the liquidation of the Constitution of the SAP of Kosova (45) found the support of the organizers of the demonstrations, the leadership of Serbia, who at a rally in Belgrade on November 19, 1988, called for the solution of the problems of Kosova not through rallies, but "through war" and "the settling of accounts with the Albanians."(46) The demands for the deportation of 250 000 Albanians (47) also intensified the violence against the Albanian population of Kosova. The aim of the Great-Serb chauvinists is to suppress and finally subjugate the Albanians and to establish a racist apartheid regime in Kosova.

Even in the most difficult situation which the Great-Serbs have created in Kosova, Macedonia and the whole of Yugoslavia and although they are still subject to the terror and



insults which affect their dignity as individuals and as a nation, the Albanians, relying on their own forces, are adopting a wise attitude. Even during the rallies from 17-21 November 1988 in Prishtina, in which tens of thousands of workers and representatives of other Albanian strata, most of whom had walked 50 and 100 miles through snow to get there, the Albanians defended their national rights and the autonomy of Kosova within the Constitutional rules and laws of the Yugoslav Federation and protested against the insults and humiliation to which they were subjected. The Albanians did not come out in the streets like the Serbs who carried a portrait of Alexander Karadjordjevic, the king overthrown by the people's revolution, and a portrait of Milosevic along with it. The demands and slogans of the Albanians were neither nationalist nor counter-revolutionary, as the leaderships of Serbia and Yugoslavia claimed, nor did they express the aspirations of Albanians to hegemony or Albanian chauvinism, but they were the legitimate aspirations of an oppressed people which demands the right to be treated the same as the other peoples of Yugoslavia. That is how the Albanian miners of Trepçe acted during their strike in February 1989, in which they displayed their readiness to sacrifice even their lives to defend the autonomy of Kosova within the laws and Constitution of Yugoslavia, the autonomy Serbia liquidated through the new Constitutional amendments of March 1989. However, despite the restrained stand of the Albanians, Serbia and the Yugoslav Federation used the force of arms, dispatching at the end of February 1989 large police and military forces to Kosova to massacre the Albanians and proclaim the state of emergency which continues to this day.

The peaceful manifestations of the Albanians of Kosova held in 20 communes of the Province from January 23 to February 6, 1990 were suppressed with arm and police violence. About 200,000 Albanians who took part in them demanded in a peaceful way and in conformity with the laws of the Yugoslav Federation that the Albanians be given the national and democratic rights which the other peoples of Yugoslavia enjoy, that the state of emergency be lifted, that autonomy be restored to Kosova, that trials and the bloodshed caused by the Serb police be stopped. Serbia and the federal organs once again resorted to the use of force with large militia units against unarmed demonstrators, killing 35 and wounding hundreds of them. They also mobilized the army against the people of Kosova, isolating cities of the Province.

During February and March 1990 the Albanians were systematically terrorized; a policy that continues to date. The cities of the Province are isolated. All this aroused the indignation of some people in Yugoslavia and Slovenia. World opinion and all International Organizations regarding Human Right protested. On February 16, 1990 the European Parliament protested energetically against the state terrorism against the Albanian population of Kosova. Members of the USA Congress also put in protests.

Despite the fact that the federal administration lifted the state of emergency on April 19, 1990, the terror exercised by the Serbian militia still goes on in Kosova. In April of this year the militia received new contingents, the staff of the administration of regional internal affairs was renewed establishing complete control over the Province.

The cessation of violence against the Albanians of Kosova and other regions, the recognition of their rights, i.e. the recognition of the Republic of Kosova, respect for their national identity language, culture traditions, and a spiritual link with their nation, would help create the atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect between Yugoslavs and Albanians and all the people of Balkan Peninsula so much needed today.



## NOTES

- 1 S.Djakovic, *Sukobu u Kosovu*, Belgrade 1984; D.Bogdanovi, *Knjiga o Kosovu*, Belgrade 1985; B.Perunicic, *Pisma Srbskih Konzul iz Prishtine (1890-1900)*, Belgrade 1985; *Rilindja*, December 4, 1988; *Meeting of the organization of Electroeconomy*.
- 2 Belgrade, DPA/APA, Sept.5, 1988; TANJUG, September 5, 1988.
- 3 TANJUG, Belgrade, December 17, 1988.
- 4 TANJUG, Belgrade, December 18, 1988.
- 5 *Kosovo, Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989, pp.146-161.
- 6 *Ibidem*, pp.230-240.
- 7 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, May 11, 1984, p.6, *Talk with M.Maliqi*.
- 8 *Ibidem*, Prishtina, November 4, 1986.
- 9 TANJUG, Belgrade, September 12, 1988.
- 10 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, January 21, 1989, "Demographic problems of Kosova and their interpretation".
- 11 TANJUG, Belgrade, September 1, 1988.
- 12 TANJUG, October 31, 1988.
- 13 *Ibidem*, September 13, 1988.
- 14 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 8, 1988.
- 15 *Ibidem*.
- 16 TANJUG, Prishtina, February 8, 1988, *Plenum of the Provincial Committee of the LC of Kosova*.
- 17 TANJUG, Shkup, September 26, 1988.
- 18 TANJUG, Prishtina, October 11, 1989.
- 19 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, September 22, 1986.
- 20 *Rilindja*, April 15, 1988. "The Paradoxes of a bill"; *Ibid.*, April 24, 1988, "An Unacceptable Bill."
- 21 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, September 2, 1988, "Baseless claims".
- 22 *Ibidem*.
- 23 *Kosova-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989, pp.197-208.
- 24 *Ibidem*, pp.240-253.
- 25 *Ibid.*, December 6, 1988. "The special meeting of the Provincial Committee of the LC of Kosova has ended."
- 27 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, April 3, 1988. "The dangerous language."
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 TANJUG Gostivar, October 18, 1988.
- 30 TANJUG Shkup, September 2, 1988.
- 31 Belgrade, ASP, APA, September 30, 1988.
- 32 *Politika*, Belgrade, January 20, 1987. The Purging of the Reading Syllabuses and books. See also *Rilindja*, Prishtina, January 20, 1987.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 TANJUG Prishtina, March 25, 1988.
- 35 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 6, 1988. The special meeting of the Provincial Committee of the LC of Kosova has ended.
- 36 Belgrade, TANJUG, January 29, 1987. The Assembly of Yugoslavia regarding the prevention of the emigration from Kosova. At this meeting the figure of 20 456 Serbs and Montenegrins emigrated after 1981 was given. During the Serbian demonstrations of August October 1988, this figure was raised to 2 200 and 30 000 persons. (Author's note).
- 37 *Ibidem*.



- 38 *Rilindja*, March 4, 1987. The emigrations and ethnic movements of Yugoslavs.
- 39 *TANJUG*, Belgrade, October 28, 1988.
- 40 *Rilindja*, April 3, 1988, *The migrations from Kosova to Croatia*.
- 41 Gottingen, Vienna, APA, September 7, 1988.
- 42 *Kosovo-Past and Present*, Belgrade 1989; Ruza Petrovic and Marina Blagovic, *Migrations of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohia*, pp. 259-273.
- 43 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, December 21, 1988, p.5. *From the meeting of the Chambers of the Assembly of Kosova*.
- 44 Belgrade, *Reuter*, AP, AFP, APA, October 13, 1988.
- 45 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, September 4, 1988.
- 46 Belgrade, AFP, *TANJUG*, November 19, 1988.
- 47 *Rilindja*, Prishtina, January 16, 1987.



## THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND THE AUTONOMY OF KOSOVA

The Assembly of the SFRY, in November 1988, and that of Serbia, in March 1989, each endorsed the amendments on the changes of the Constitution of the Yugoslav Federation and that of the SR of Serbia.

These changes were preceded by an extensive and systematic anti-Albanian propaganda campaign, blaming the Republic of Albania for inciting and inspiring Albanian "separatism" in Yugoslavia, and against the language, culture and historical traditions of the Albanian nationality of Kosova. This campaign was built up along with protracted preparatory work and numerous discussions, during which the leadership of Serbia and its representatives presented the need for these changes as a vital demand for the Serbian people to regain their rights which had allegedly been curtailed since the Liberation of the country and, especially, following the endorsement of the Federal Constitution of 1974. Through their slogan "Serbia lost in peace what it gained in war", the Serbian leaders claimed that Serbia had been crippled and lost the characteristics of an integral unified state. They demanded that the constitutional provisions that had been issued be re-examined, especially those governing the autonomous position of Kosova and Vojvodina within Serbia and its power be affirmed over the whole of its territory, including that of the two provinces. In the anomalous constitutional position of Serbia and the two autonomous provinces, the Belgrade propaganda saw the main source of all the evils which have affected Yugoslavia today: the grave economic crisis, the political disintegration, and national quarrels. It blamed the emigration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosova on the domination in the region of the "Albanian national bureaucracy."

Historical study shows that the autonomy of Kosova is the result of an evolution which has been influenced by various factors, such as the struggle of the Albanians of Kosova against national oppression in old Yugoslavia, its participation in the National Liberation War during the Second World War, the struggle of all the working masses and the peoples of Yugoslavia for social and national rights, the stands of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (later the League of Communists of Yugoslavia), and the ratio of forces in that Party and in Yugoslavia among various groups.

The autonomy of Kosova is not a result of anti-Serbian political alliances, nor of the activity of Albanian nationalism or separatism, and even less of "plots" on the part of Albania. It has its source in the political programme of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia which, in the first years of its existence, stressed the principle of self-determination of the Albanian population of Kosova up to secession from Yugoslavia and unification with Albania.<sup>(1)</sup> Even after 1935, in the conditions when the CPY was already following the course of the preservation of Yugoslavia, it recognized the principle of autonomy, which in fact was applied in 1940, when the 5th Conference of the CPY approved the formation of a Regional Committee for Kosova and Metohija, linking it directly with the Central Committee like the other committees of Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia. In the report delivered by Mosa Pijade to the 5th Conference of the CPY, the position of Kosova was mentioned in connection with the national question. "Here, too", said Mosa Pijade, "the solution of the national question can be achieved through the formation of a free republic of the workers and peasants of Kosova, through the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist-fascist regime of the Great-Serb bourgeoisie."<sup>(2)</sup>

During the Second World War, after the fascist occupation of Yugoslavia when Kosova



was united with Albania, which was likewise occupied by the fascists, although the Party organization of Kosova was incorporated into the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, it maintained close links with the Communist Party of Albania. To give a greater incentive to the Anti-fascist National Liberation War in Kosova and to make possible the broadest participation of the Albanian masses in it, Miladin Popovic(\*), proposed in a letter to Tito in July 1943 that the party organization of Kosova and Metohija should be transferred to the CPA and the Kosova partisan units to the General Staff of the Albanian National Liberation Army. At the same time, Miladin Popovic proposed that the CPY should make a clear statement about the right of the Albanians of Kosova to self-determination up to secession and unification with Albania, if they should desire such a thing.

The CC of the CPY rejected Miladin Popovic's proposal, which had been made with the approval of the CC of the CPA.(3) In a letter written to the CC of the CPA in the autumn of 1943, after formally admitting the right of the Albanians of Kosova to freely decide their own destiny, Tito implied that after the war, Kosova would remain with Yugoslavia. "The new Yugoslavia which is being created," wrote Tito "will be a country of free peoples, and thus there will be no room for national oppression of the Albanian minority, either."(4)

At the 2nd Meeting of AVNOJ, which decided to form the new Yugoslavia with six federated units, Kosova was neither represented nor mentioned, apparently because final consensus about its position in Federal Yugoslavia had not been reached. At the scientific meeting on the Conference of Bujan, organized in Belgrade in December 1944 by the commission on the history of the LCY at the CC of the LCY and by the centre for social investigations at the CC of the LCY(5), Vjenceslav Glisic said that at the time when consultations on the organization of the new Yugoslav state began in Vis, Tito, Kardelj and Bakaric put forward the idea that Kosova should become an autonomous region. After this, according to a British report, the Main Staff of the National Liberation Army of Serbia informed the chief of the British military mission attached to it that Kosova and Metohija would not be within the borders of the new Federal Serbia, but would be a separate entity, perhaps like Vojvodina. Quoting Vladimir Dedijer, Glisic said that the final decision about the status of Kosova and Metohija was taken in February 1945, at a meeting in Belgrade in which the main Yugoslav leaders took part. This meeting concluded that Kosova and Metohija should become an autonomous region within the framework of Serbia. Then, the 3rd Conference of the Party of Kosova and Metohija was held, at which it was decided that the Regional Committee should no longer maintain direct contact with the CC of the CPY but with the CC of the Communist Party of Serbia. All these decisions totally disregarded the Resolution taken by the National Liberation Council for Kosova and the Dukagjin Plateau at Bujan, which expressed the aspiration of the people of this region for self-determination.(6) From February 8 until the middle of May 1945, on the pretext of the liquidation of counter-revolutionary forces, a military administration was established in Kosova which installed a regime of oppression and terror, while from 8-10 July 1945 the Regional Assembly was convened in Prizren, where it was decided that Kosova and Metohija should be annexed to Serbia as an autonomous region.

The position of Kosova was sanctioned, also, by the first Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia adopted on January 31, 1946. In defining the subjects of Federal Yugoslavia, the Constitution, besides six federated republics, also mentioned the autonomous regions, while pointing out that they were within the context of Serbia. According to the Constitution, the Federation determined the fundamental principles of the organization and functioning of the autonomous regions, as well as the supreme organs of power in them, while the definition of the rights and the field of operation of autonomy was left to the competence of the Republic.(7) which had the right to sanction the statute of the autonomous region after having been adopted by the highest organs of the region.

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Serbia of January 1947 defined the



competences and organization of the region in detail. The Assembly of the Republic had the right to disband the Regional People's Council and to proclaim elections for a new council, as well as to dismiss the Regional Executive Committee. The Presidium of the People's Assembly of Serbia could annul the decisions of the Regional People's Council, the Republican government could annul the decisions of the Regional Executive Committee, while the members of the Republican Government could annul the acts of members of the Regional Executive Committee.

It must be pointed out that the right of autonomy was not equal for Kosova and for Vojvodina. The latter was named an autonomous province (*pokrajina* in Serbo-Croat), while Kosova and Metohija was described as a region (*oblast* in Serbo-Croat). The difference was not only in the name. Kosova did not enjoy autonomy of its court, because the decisions of its court could be examined and reversed by the judicial body of the republic, whereas Vojvodina, having this autonomy, also had its own supreme court, as the highest court of the province. Besides this, Vojvodina was represented in the Chamber of Nations of the Federal People's Assembly with 15 deputies, while Kosova and Metohija had only 10.

In January 1953, a new Constitution of the FPRY was adopted. It contained very general dispositions on the autonomous provinces and authorized the Republic of Serbia to define their rights in its Constitution. Thus, the Federation did not explicitly guarantee the rights of regions, which were no longer considered their original rights, but only rights deriving from those of the Republic, which the latter passed on to the regions. As a result of these constitutional changes, the autonomy began to be weakened, gradually lost its qualities as a federative category, and was transformed into a category and a creation of the republic.(8)

Through the Constitution of the SFR of Yugoslavia of 1963 and the Constitution of Serbia which was adopted later that same year, the autonomous regions of Kosova and Metohija and Vojvodina were made completely equal from the stand-points of name, juridical position, and organization. However, the Constitution of 1963 developed the line begun by the 1953 Constitution in the direction of changing the autonomous region into an exclusive subject of the republic. This line was reflected, among other things, in the fact that now the Constitution of SFRY did not contain a separate chapter about the autonomous regions, but only mentioned them in the dispositions which were devoted to the republic. Now the possibility was foreseen that the republics themselves could form autonomous units and that the republican constitution would define the fundamental rights, duties and principles of the organization of autonomous regions. While mentioning the decision of the People's Assembly of Serbia of 1945 as the juridical source of the formation of the autonomous regions of Kosova and Metohija and Vojvodina, the 1963 Constitution of the SFRY totally ignored the respective decisions of their assemblies.(9)

According to the Constitution of the SR of Serbia, the autonomous region was independent in dealing with its matters of general interest, especially in the fields of economy, primary and secondary school, culture, health service, social security, and communal relations. However, these rights became fictitious, bearing in mind that Article 135, Paragraph 5 of the Constitution of Serbia contains a restrictive clause, specifying: "in the fields which on the basis of the Constitution are governed only by law, the autonomous region can regulate certain questions provided it is authorized to do this through the republican law." Since the republican laws (and the federal laws) regulated the matters in detail, very little room was left for the promulgation of legal acts by the regions, a thing which was reflected in the small amount of normative activity of the Regional Assembly of Kosova and Metohija during the period 1963-1968.(10) And what is more, now Vojvodina, too, lost the judicial autonomy which, unlike Kosova, it had enjoyed.

It was difficult for the Albanian masses in Kosova to reconcile themselves to these restrictions on the autonomy of the region, which were gradually being introduced. Even in the



conditions of Great-Serb repression, they exerted their pressure in various forms and expressed their aspirations for democratic freedoms and equality with the other peoples of Yugoslavia.

The elimination of the Rankovic group in 1966 and the blow which Great-Serb chauvinism suffered as a result created the premises for the extension of the competences and the strengthening of the autonomy of the regions. With the amendments which were made to the Constitution of the SFRY in 1967 and 1968 and that of Serbia in 1969, the regions, different from the state of affairs sanctioned in the Constitutions of 1953 and 1963, were again treated as constituent elements of the Federation and not simply as parts of the juridical order of the Republic. They were responsible not only for their own development, but also for that of the Federation. Once again the rights of regions were treated as original and protected by the Federation and not as originating from the rights of the republic. In place of branches of the supreme court of Serbia, the region got its own supreme court with judicial autonomy. For historical-geographical and linguistic reasons, the autonomous region of Kosova and Metohija was named the "Autonomous Socialist Region of Kosova".

The delegation of the autonomous region in the Chamber of Nations in the Federal Assembly was no longer a component part of the delegation of the SR of Serbia and, in principle, had equal rights with the delegations of republics.

The amendments which were made to the Constitution of Yugoslavia in 1971 and that of Serbia in 1972 further strengthened the autonomous position of the region, which formed its own constitutional court for the defence of constitutionalism and legality. With the creation of the economic high court, the region extended its judicial and financial autonomy.

In essence, the autonomous regions now exercised most of the functions which the republics had, with the exception of those which presented common interests for the nations and nationalities of Serbia and which were laid down in the republican constitution as unified functions which the republic exercised.

Besides this, in regard to its position in the Federation, the amendments of 1967-1968 guaranteed a greater position and role to the autonomous region. As a constituent element of the federation and being a part of Serbia, the autonomous region, in principle, had the rights and duties which the republics enjoyed in their relations with the federation.

These constitutional changes, realized through amendments to the Constitution in 1963, were sanctioned in the Constitution of the SFRY of 1974.

Undoubtedly, this extension of its autonomy satisfied the aspirations of the Albanian population of Kosova, but it did not fulfil its desire for complete equality with the other peoples of Yugoslavia, an equality which could be ensured through the turning of Kosova into a republic of the Yugoslav Federation. In 1968, the official organs of Kosova presented to the high assembly of Yugoslavia their request for the examination of such a solution.<sup>(11)</sup> This request was not simply an expression of the desires of the Albanian "national bureaucracy" in Kosova for greater power, and even less an expression of its "separatist" tendencies, as is claimed by some of the authors of the book *Kosovo-Past and Present*, but was a result of the powerful pressure which the Albanian population, especially the youth and the intelligentsia, exerted on the leaders of the region. The Yugoslav leadership's refusal aroused the discontent of the broad masses of Albanians who regarded separation from Serbia and the establishment of the status of the republic as a guarantee against a Great-Serb revanchist offensive against their rights. This discontent was the basic factor in the big demonstrations of the Albanians of Kosova in November 1968 and April 1981, which took place under the slogan "Kosova Republic".

Subsequent events showed how well-founded the Albanians' suspicions and worries were.

In the situation created after the death of Tito, when the new Serbian leadership, headed by Slobodan Milosevic, considered that its positions had been strengthened both in the LCY and in the Yugoslav Federation, it commenced the campaign against the autonomy of Kosova and Vojvodina, considering its victory on this question as the first step towards the establishment



of the hegemony of Serbia over the whole of Yugoslavia.

It is known that the demands of the Serbian leadership were reflected partly in the amendments to the Constitution of the SFRY and completely in the amendments to the Constitution of the SR of Serbia. Likewise, it is known, that in Kosova, in a broad discussion conducted for several months in the work centres, the state organs, the social organizations and the commissions of the Regional Assembly, the proposals for the alterations to the federal constitution were endorsed, as were a good part of the changes which were proposed to the Constitution of Serbia. However, the public opinion of Kosova, in all phases of this discussion and in all the respective instances, expressed itself clearly and firmly against them, which obviously violated the autonomy of the region. The voice of the representatives of Kosova was totally disregarded in the Assembly of Serbia and in its commissions and, in the end, under conditions of the state of emergency in Kosova, in the presence of tanks, police and military forces, the Regional Assembly accepted the changes to the Constitution of Serbia which were then proclaimed officially by the Assembly of the Republic in the new Constitution of 1989. The entire people of Kosova, the working class, students and pupils, intellectuals and so on, rose against these arbitrary acts which trampled on their democratically expressed will. The savage violence of Great-Serb chauvinism was hurled against them.

Before and after the adoption of constitutional changes, the propaganda of Belgrade has been careful to stress that they do not infringe the autonomy of regions, but merely correct the injustices done to Serbia by negating its existence as a unified state and adjusted some anomalies in the relations between the republic and the regions.

The truth is that with the constitutional changes in such important fields as legislation and justice, territorial defence, the preservation of public order, international relations and economic planning, the main competences were removed from the regions and transferred directly to the Republic of Serbia.

Even those limited competences the region had in defence, especially for the territorial and civil defence, were transferred to the republic. Amendment XXXIII annuls one point in Article 300 of the Constitution of Serbia which stipulated that for all these questions "the basic principles are regulated in a unified manner by the republican law", whereas examination and specification of them in concrete terms were left to the powers of regional organs.

In the field of law and justice, now the Constitutional Court of Serbia will have right to give its opinion to the Republican Assembly whether the regional constitution is in opposition to that of the republic. If such a thing is confirmed, then the Assembly of the Autonomous Region is obliged, within one year, to alter the respective article or articles and to harmonize them with the Constitution of Serbia. If this contradiction is not removed within a period of one year, these articles of the regional constitution automatically fall into abeyance.

The legal norms of the Regional Assembly and the acts of other organs of the state and the economy also must be in accord with republican laws, otherwise, they must be annulled. If the Regional Constitutional Court fails to do this within six months, then the Constitutional Court of the Republic intervenes. Previously, Article 423 of the Constitution, that has been amended now, stipulated that the conflicts between republican and regional laws are solved by "a special council composed of an equal number of magistrates of the Supreme Court of Serbia and the supreme courts of the autonomous regions, which is set up in the Supreme Court of the SR of Serbia."

In the first phase of the discussion of the draft-amendments, it was proposed that the regional organs should be responsible for the application of the republican law in their territory, while now it has been decided that when the regional organs do not apply the republican law, the republican organs do this directly.

Amendment XXVI gives the Assembly of Serbia full powers "to appoint and dismiss court judges and public attorneys in the whole territory of the SR of Serbia." Thus, the



respective paragraphs of Articles 253 and 287 of the Constitution, which stated that judges and public attorneys are appointed and dismissed by the assemblies of the respective social-political communities (of the communes or regions whose courts are under their territorial jurisdiction) were annulled.

In the administrative field, too, amendment XXXI to the Constitution of Serbia says that "the organs of the administration of the republic have the right to issue instructions which the organs of the autonomous region are bound to carry out." The republican administrative organs did not have this right in the past. Likewise, on the basis of this amendment, the republican administrative organs are entitled "to establish direct contact with and issue orders to the communes in the autonomous regions." Hence, it annulled Article 296 of the Constitution of Serbia which stipulated that "the republican organs should communicate with the communal organs of the autonomous regions through the respective organs of the Autonomous Region."

The Republic determines the regulation of property and family relations and relations of inheritance, public loans, the protection of the environment, the control of waters, the system of people's defence in the interests of the whole republic, the system of preservation of the order and social and economic planning, in a unified manner for its whole territory. The transfer of these competences to the republic was described during the public discussions in Kosova as a centralist tendency behind which were concealed urbanistic plans for the shifting of inhabited centres and the ruining of Albanians' houses.

In the field of international relations, amendment XXXVI rendered ineffective Article 313 of the Constitution which stated that the republic realizes cooperation in this field on questions of interest for the whole republic, whereas on questions of interests for the autonomous regions alone, this cooperation is realized by the autonomous regions themselves. It is envisaged that "the autonomous regions will realize their international cooperation in the context of the international cooperation of the SR of Serbia." Opposing this amendment in the phase of public discussion, the regional organs and social organizations pointed out that its adoption would lead to the economic and social impoverishment of Kosova, returning it to the state of affairs which existed before the Brioni plenum which hit Alexander Rankovic and his group. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the maintenance of the competences of the region in the external field would facilitate the contact with the numerous emigrants from Kosova.

Another competence which has now passed to the republic is the unified regulation of the system of primary and vocational secondary schooling and the guarantee of the official use of the Serbo-Croat language and languages of the nationalities. Amendment XXVII now says that in the SR of Serbia, the Serbo-Croat language is in official and public use, while in the zones where separate nationalities live, the Serbo-Croat language and the languages of other nationalities are in equal official and public use in conformity with the Constitution and the law. According to Article 240 of the Constitution of 1974, nullified by the above amendment, the language which would be used in the state organs and in the organizations within the territory of the region, was determined by the regional constitution, hence now priority is given to the Serbo-Croat language, while the languages of the nationalities take second place, contrary to the principles of the Constitution of the SFRY which lay down the complete equality of languages of nations and nationalities.

The well-known Kosovar linguist, Idriz Ajeti, has said, "The definitions which are made of the use of languages in the amendments to the Constitution of Serbia permit no other interpretation except that, in the final analysis, in the future, the aim is to gradually and systematically eliminate the Albanian language from official use and wipe it out." This interpretation finds support in the conclusions which the Association of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia sent to the republican commission on constitutional questions in November 1988, which say: "Teaching can be done in the Serbo-Croat language, which is the state language, and the Albanian language, as the language of the nationality, on



condition that the students who do their studies in the Albanian language must have knowledge of Serbo-Croat as the official language of the SR of Serbia; they can be employed only in the territory of Kosova and Metohija /sic!/, if they have done their studies only in the Albanian language..."(12) With such proposals, which are not at all "vox clamantis in deserto", the intention is that the Albanian language will be confined to a sort of ghetto.

The restriction of the rights of the autonomous regions is clearly apparent, also, in the procedure which has been established for future alterations to the Constitution of the republic. Previously, the Constitution of Serbia provided that the Assembly of the republic would decide on changes to this Constitution. If the alterations to the Constitution had to do with matters of interest to the entire republic (i.e. also to the regions), then the Republican Assembly would decide on the basis of the approval of the assemblies of the autonomous regions.

Through a new amendment, it has been decided that only the regional assemblies give opinions (the same as the communes!) for the alteration to the republican Constitution, a thing which is contrary to the conclusions of the 17th Plenum of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and to the original proposals of the Presidency of the SR of Serbia itself. This amendment passed directly to the Republican Assembly without being submitted for public discussion, as was done with the other amendments. To calm the reaction of delegates from Kosova to some extent, in the end, the Assembly of Serbia agreed that an addition be made to this amendment, stating that, with the changes of the Constitution of Serbia, the position, rights and obligations of autonomous socialist regions defined in the Constitution of the SFRY could not be changed. But, in reality, this is simply a declaration which, in fact, is annulled by the content of all the other amendments.

These changes which violate the regional autonomy are so fundamental that the question has been quite rightly asked in the Yugoslav press: What remains of this autonomy in the constitutional system of the SFRY ?

However, these steps were only the beginning of the process which the Serbian leadership undertook for the liquidation of the autonomy of Kosova. The Presidium of the LC of Serbia at the meeting of October 1988 stated explicitly: "The changes in the Constitution, on which we have already decided, are only the first step in this direction. For this reason, we must insist on proceeding to the adoption of a new constitution which will aim at further changes in the political system." In the Constitutional Commission of the Assembly of Serbia it was pointed out that Serbia will insist that, in the new Yugoslav constitution, changes and reforms are made in the political system, including the present method of election of the Presidency of Yugoslavia, the structure of the Assembly of the SFRY, reduction in the cases of taking decisions with consensus and further increases in the competences of the republic in the autonomous regions. The approbation of the new Serbian Constitution on March, 28-th, 1989 finally liquidated the Constitution of Kosova of 1974 and its status as Autonomous Province in Yugoslav Federation.

The changes made to the detriment of the autonomy of regions are justified by the Serbian leadership and its spokesmen with the right of the Serbian people to have their own unified state, equal with the other Yugoslav republics, as well as with historical and juridical arguments about the complete sovereignty which Serbia allegedly has over these regions. In regard to the equality of Serbia with the other republics, many participants in the public discussion in Kosova have pointed out that, in its strict territory, Serbia has equal competences with the other republics, but it cannot be completely equal with them as long as it has two autonomous regions within its borders, and this difference constitutes an important special feature. If the territory of the autonomous regions is included in the territory of Serbia, in a broad sense, then it is clear that the organs of the Serbian Republic cannot have competences over this territory in the same virtue as the organs of the other republics have in the respective territory which does not include autonomous regions. If the competences of organs of the Serbian Republic were



extended without limit in the autonomous regions, then their autonomy would be reduced to a minimum or would be totally eliminated.

The main historical argument is that Kosova has been "ab antiquo" Serbian territory, the centre of the Serbian state in the 13th and 14th centuries and an important centre of Serbian religious monuments. This historical argument is very dubious, to say the least, because on the basis of this "historical right", Greece will have reason to present its claims to Istanbul, or to Asia Minor, and Italy will claim Dalmatia (as the Italian fascists tried to do in the past). Apart from this, the "historical right" is frequently a right which stems from the occupation of a territory, previously inhabited by another population, as is the case with the Serbian occupation of Kosova in the Middle Ages.

The juridical argument is that Kosova (and likewise Vojvodina) was a territory of Serbia before the formation of Yugoslavia, that, on entering the new Yugoslav state at the end of the First World War, Serbia brought this territory with it and that even today any changes in its status without the will of the Serbian people would be a violation of the principle of self-determination which this people has over that territory. Such a juridical argument about the full sovereignty of a people over the territory of regions is developed, for example, by professor Ratko Markovic of the University of Belgrade in the book *Kosova-Past and Present*.<sup>(13)</sup> One "minor" fact is overlooked: this territory has been inhabited for a very long time (we leave a more or less accurate determination of the period of time to other specialists) by an Albanian nationality which, according to official Yugoslav figures, comprises 90 per cent of the population of this region, while the Serbian people in Kosova make up less than 10 per cent of the population.

In regard to the argument that Serbia brought the territory of the regions into the newly formed Yugoslavia and that with the creation of autonomous regions after the Second World War, the state of Serbia was reduced and consequently its sovereignty infringed, it must be pointed out that, at the end of the First World War, Montenegro was united with its "sister" Serbia before the formation of Yugoslavia and that Serbia brought into the newly formed Yugoslavia the territory of Montenegro as well as that of Macedonia, which it had annexed after the Balkan Wars. Nevertheless, up till now the Great-Serbs have not employed this argument (perhaps they think it, but they do not say so) in order to claim to exert the sovereignty of Serbia over the territories of Montenegro and Macedonia.

Besides this, with the creation of monarchical Yugoslavia, all the units which comprised it, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Dalmatia, were amalgamated in it and new administrative-territorial divisions which did not take into account the old divisions in the Serbian monarchy, or in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, were established.

It is noteworthy that after the Second World War, the Serbian state was reconstituted at a meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council of Serbia, which was held in Belgrade in November 1944 and in which the representatives of Kosova and Vojvodina did not take part. At that time, these regions functioned in fact as independent units in the framework of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia as long as their position had not been defined. This did not prevent Serbia from enjoying all its state prerogatives, just as in other units of the Federation, even without having within it the two regions: Kosova and Vojvodina. It was not until July 10, 1945 that the Assembly of Kosova decided that the region should be annexed to Serbia and the Assembly of Vojvodina did the same thing on July 31, 1945. Hence, these autonomous regions have not emerged from within Serbia, thus diminishing its prerogatives as a state. Consequently, as the Association of the Jurists of Kosova pointed out during the discussion of constitutional amendments,<sup>(14)</sup> "Serbia has not lost in peace anything it had allegedly gained in war, let alone lost its own unified Republic." It is another matter if the present-day Great-Serbs have a nostalgia about the bygone times before the war when not only Kosova but also Macedonia and the other units had been fragmented in *Banovinas* which were directly dependent



on Belgrade - the centre of the unitary Yugoslav state in which the Great-Serbs of that time ruled. In order to wipe out this past, in order to wipe out Yugoslavia as a prison of peoples, all the peoples of Yugoslavia have fought.

Irrespective of the historical and juridical or political arguments, it is a fact that the escalation of the juridical-constitutional measures, aimed at the greatest possible restriction and possibly at the elimination of the autonomy of Kosova, is proceeding along with the stepping up of the violence and propaganda against Albanians. According to official figures announced by Rahman Morina, at that time regional secretary for internal affairs and now chairman of the Regional Committee of the League of Communists, from 1981 to March 1988, in Kosova 75 000 people have been condemned for penal acts and 95 000 others for minor contraventions. A total of 314 000 people have been dealt with in other ways by the security organs. Thus, in a period of 7 years, 584 000 people, that is, half the adult population of the region, have been dealt with in various ways by the courts and security organs in Kosova. Following the bloody suppression of the demonstrations of March 1989, in which the Albanians expressed their concern and protest about the constitutional changes to the detriment of their autonomy, the campaign of "differentiation", that is of imprisonment, isolation, dismissals from work, expulsion from the League of Communists and other social organizations, has been going on all over Kosova. The target of this campaign are, first of all, the Albanian intelligentsia of Kosova and the Albanian culture and school in the Albanian language.

For the school-year 1989-1990, it is predicted that 11 000 Albanian pupils who complete the primary schools will not be able to be enrolled in the secondary schools, while 6 500 more Serbian and Montenegrin pupils will be enrolled in the secondary schools. In the school-year 1988-1989, 32 145 pupils attended the secondary schools in the Albanian language, while in the current year only 21 050 pupils will attend them. In 1991 more than 100 000 Albanians were dismissed from the enterprises or administration; lessons in Albanian were interrupted both in secondary schools and University of Prishtina. Professors of the University and researchers or scientists of the Institute of History, Institute of Albanology were dismissed, too.

Despite the statements that the situation is being normalized, savage measures taken against the Albanians continue with the same intensity. The Albanians of Kosova and world opinion are worried and indignant at these flagrant violations of human rights which are contrary to present development trends in Europe.

The present situation in Kosova is characterized by a total lack of equality, by discrimination on the basis of national identity, and rejection of any kind of dialogue with the true representatives of the Albanian population.



## NOTES

1 See D.Pesic: *The Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the National Question of Albanians Between the Two World Wars*, in "Kosovo-Past and Present", Belgrade 1989, p.95.

2 S.Aksic, *Polozaj autonomnih pokrajina u ustavnom sistemu SFRJ*, "Naučna knjiga", Belgrade 1967, p.75.

\* Until his internment in Albania, he had been political secretary of the Regional Committee for Kosova and Metohija, and after he was liberated by the Albanian communists, remained as an envoy of the CPY to the CPA.

3 S.V.Tempo, *Borba za Balkan*, Zagreb, 1981, f.84.

4 From the Letter of the CC of the CPY addressed to the CC of the CPA on October 25, 1943, and which is held in the Central Archives of the CPA, quoted from Enver Hoxha in *The Titoites*, p.108, Eng.ed.

5 See *Rilindja*, December 16, 1988.

6 See the article "On the Conference of Bujan", p... of this volume.

7 K.Salihi, *The Birth, Development, Position and the Aspects of the Autonomy of the Autonomous Socialist Region of Kosova in socialist Yugoslavia*, Prishtina 1984 pp.39-40.

8 K.Salihi, *op.cit.*, pp. 45-46.

9 *Ibidem*.

10 K.Salihi, *op.cit.*, p.49.

11 Milos Misovic, *Continuity in the Albanization of Kosovo*, in: "Kosovo-Past and Present", Belgrade 1989, pp. 247-249.

12 See *Rilindja*, November 6, 1988.

13 R.Markovic, *Why Cannot Kosova Become a Republic ?* in: "Kosovo-Past and Present", Belgrade 1989, p.174 and on.



REXHEP QOSJA

Prishtina - (1992. 12. 20)

**OPEN LETTER TO THE SERBIAN WRITERS PARTICIPANTS  
IN THE MEETING "ABOUT KOSOVA AND FOR KOSOVA" (\*)**

Because, in the books you have written and in the meetings where you have spoken about the Albanians and Kosova, you have put aside any respect for truth, and also, for humanitarian feelings, I am addressing an open letter to you, hoping that you will think at least a little about my opinions. Of course, I do not know all the things you said in the meeting "About Kosova and for Kosova", but even what I have been able to read in some newspapers, such as *Rilindja* and *Jedinstvo* of Prishtina, which have been informing public opinion about this subject, was enough for me to understand the content of your Kosovar metaphysics and to infer its messages. It is true that this is not the first time that the holy synod of the Association of Writers of Serbia has held a meeting at "Francuska 7" devoted to the Albanians and Kosova, but, possibly, it is the first time that participating in it were not only some of the outstanding contemporary writers of Serbia, known throughout the country and beyond it, but also some scholars and literary historians who until yesterday, as members of the highest political organs of the LC of Serbia, have spoken from its tribune about international relations from the stand-point of Marxist dialectics and not that of holy metaphysics. In fact, you are happy individuals because you are free from every impediment. You can gather wherever you like and not only at "Francuska 7". To your meetings you can even invite priests who may or may not have an interest in literature; you can hold discussions without any kind of censorship and without any kind of self-censorship about any kind of literary or purely political questions and, especially, about the Albanians and Kosova. You can travel all over the world to Europe, the USA, Australia and other continents and can speak about everything at "Francuska 7". You are happy because you are truly free from bureaucratic "loyalty" to yourselves. Whereas you can gather and speak about political topics, publish old myths and invent new ones about Kosova, praise and criticize according to your desire, I, in the few meetings of the Association of the Writers of Kosova, hear discussions mainly about literary competitions and literary and non-literary prizes and honoraria. As for your metaphysics, I can express my opinion more or less freely only in some newspapers and magazines outside Kosova.

With your actions, which might seem quite natural for men of letters, you raise high the banner of democratic freedoms and truth. You have raised this banner high now, during the debate at the meeting "About Kosova and for Kosova". However, the fact that I am addressing you publicly is an expression of the undeniable intellectual and moral right about which you talk so much; but you have created a wide and terrible gulf between the freedom, democracy and truth you allow the Albanians and sometimes, some among you, allow other nations in Yugoslavia. Of what general freedom, democracy and truth can you speak? About the freedom, democracy and truth which are indivisible because they belong to all, or about those which belong only to you? Or do you not see that the freedom of the Albanians is threatened with the ideas you advocate today, not only at this meeting but also in the outlines you have sketched out for the Kosova of the future?

For a number of years, you, and not only certain journalists have been making the Albanians a spectre which is haunting the whole of Yugoslavia and especially Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro. With your words about the Albanians and Kosova, you have really turned yourselves into a real auxiliary force in the service of those bureaucratic circles which are



trying to mitigate their own political, social and moral crisis by punishing those who are described as solely to blame for everything - the Albanians. Moreover, your meeting has become a public institution at which, through a campaign of pressure, you indoctrinate social opinion with an unprecedented anti-Albanian prejudice; its objectives are very clear and very concrete.

Do you read the daily and the periodical press ? During these years, have you read in this press, in Serbo-Croatian, what has been written about the Albanians in the past and at the present ? Of course you have. Have you read what is written about the Albanians in this recent campaign to discredit them in *Politika*, *Politika ekspres*, *Novosti*, *Borba*, *Duga*, *NIN*, *Intervju*, *Svet*, and in other newspapers and periodicals ? Of course you have.

For example, have you seen *Borba* of May 8 this year ? If you have, then you must have seen what it carried in five articles about the Albanians. The first article reports the coming meeting of the CC of the LCY for Kosova; the second criticizes the way Prishtina TV reported the gathering of Serbs and Montenegrins at Fushe-Kosova on April 24, 1987; the third, in the context of reports about the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Serbia, publishes the words of its president about the alleged organized violence against the Serbian and Montenegrin population in Kosova and the violation of their most elementary rights; the fourth speaks about the Albanians in Macedonia, about their mysterious eagerness to buy land from the Macedonians at prices said to be high, and there is also mention of the impermissibly high birth-rate; the fifth expressed concern over the Albanians from Tetova, Gostivar, Prishtina, Gjakova and Prizren having been given the promise to build hotels and restaurants for themselves in Ulqin.

Have you read the *Politika* of May 20 of this year ? Of course, you have. One of the six articles about the Albanians speaks about the monastery of Roskovec near Persheva, i.e. outside Kosova, about the graves and other objects there, which are said to have been protected by the Turks, but the Albanians today do not. Have you seen *Politika* of May 28 this year ? If you have, you may have noticed that the number of articles about the Albanians has doubled within a week, amounting to twelve. And, under the circumstances, this will continue until the plenum of the CC of the LCY is called at the end of June and afterwards, with long or short intervals, until the proclamation of constitutional changes. The Albanians everywhere, on all sides !

As if they are more numerous than the Chinese and comprise a special race from which only evil can be expected. As intellectuals, who have the duty to think, it is doubtful whether you have pondered even for an hour the place of logic in all this ? If the Albanians, who are a minority in this state, are threatening the others in Kosova because they constitute a majority, how is it possible that they can do the same even in the south of Serbia, in Macedonia and Montenegro, where they constitute a minority ?

... In some books or in a recent meeting "About Kosova and for Kosova", as well as in some newspapers and periodicals, some of you and some journalists, use insulting expressions and put the Albanians in an inferior position; you are proving to be more fertile than the Russian chauvinists in the invention of disparaging epithets about the members of the minorities in Tzarist Russia. In certain newspapers and periodicals, the names of Albanians are often substituted with the expression "people with white felt caps"; in a number of plays the Albanians are presented as barbarians, robbers, spies, imbeciles. *Letopisu matice srpske* for March, April 1987, reports that in certain TV studios and hotel lounges, where writers gather, they call the Albanians scum; in one of your earlier meetings one writer demanded that the Albanians be deported across the border; in the last one, one of them called them uncivilized rebels. A well-known poet and translator recited his own symbolic verse "The Barbarians", while a critic read excerpts from the collection of poems "Persecution", which allegedly represents the stand of Serbs and Montenegrins, but which, instead, is the author's own stand towards Albanians :



*Even the noose strangling  
Till heart beat stops  
We shall bear,  
So that in that world  
These people will not be our neighbours.*

I can never be convinced that songs, plays, essays, stories and novels full of such insulting words and such an attitude towards a people can provide spiritual satisfaction. However, I cannot fail to ask: Do not such words and thoughts remind you of the public persecutions 50 years ago in an environment more civilized than our Balkan countries? Do we not have to do here with an outpouring of opinions which can be called racist? Is it possible that, even to this day, some writers and critics want to leave as a heritage for the future their artistic or scientific writings with racist tendencies towards a people with whom they have lived for centuries and have shared good and evil, or towards any other people at all?

The Albanians, noted for their dignity, are hit harder by the methods used in discussions about them in the press, in the periodicals, sometime on the radio or TV, and especially in the literary meetings or the gatherings of veterans. They are also hit by blackmail, exposure before public opinion. They are made the victims of cynicism, the calls to give endless explanations, and public underestimation. Some individuals who, after 30 or 40 years of uninterrupted literary or scientific work have retired on pension, are not left to pass the last years of their life quietly. Some others, who are ill and old and who up till recently were university professors, are not left to die quietly. And some, who all their lives have behaved as was required of them, are now being asked to give an account of what they were supposed to have thought or felt 44 years ago.

It is demanded that certain historical events should be treated, not as they were in their own time, but as someone would like them to be today. Thus, not only people, but also history is faced with the impossible. The brutality of settling accounts with individuals and history is clear in the public discrediting of the family life of certain individuals, which is a sacred and inviolable tradition in Albanian life.

Do you understand that such public discrediting insults the dignity and sovereignty of the personality? It is quite plain that, in several instances, the notorious practice has been applied: first, tarnishing of the moral reputation, then political elimination. Some who are amongst you, have associated themselves with such a rule in the discussion of the Albanians and Kosova, and although you have written many pages and made many statements against such a rule. In this way, your meetings about the Albanians and Kosova in these years have been turned into a court which, in fact, condemned the Albanian people of Yugoslavia before the whole public opinion. Have you ever stopped to think that you are replacing your mission as advocates of freedom, democracy and the truth with that of a public prosecutor against a people?

What purpose does this discourse of yours serve? It serves only to express your concern over the deteriorating relations among nationalities in Kosova, which we who live and have to live in Kosova are more painfully experiencing. But, of course, not only this. These programmed discourses of yours, the harshness and boldness of which so frequently depend on the effect they are supposed to make, have their own aims. In fact, by so doing, you are trying to make the expression of any other opinion about Kosova impossible and, in this way, you give yourselves the privilege of the sole judge of the truth, indeed the permanent truth. Since this truth runs counter to your aims, you, with such speeches and in fact with the well-known trick of replacing theses, want to smother it in embryo...

You have put yourselves in an inglorious position for intellectuals whose role is not to suppress but to defend the truth, even when this does not suit them. It seems as if you have no obligation at all either towards the truth itself or towards that culture to which you belong and to which creative personalities like Dositoje, Obradovic, Vuk Karadjic, Svetozar Markovic and



Jovan Skerlic have given their works.

Although we are now on the verge of the 21st century, you see the truth about the Albanians and Kosova from the standpoint of the patriarchs of Peja and thus refuse to think about the truth from another point of view.

The hyperbolic style itself usually indicates the true face of the usurpation of the truth. The final aims of this literary-political discourse about Albanians cannot be fully understood simply on the basis of insulting words, described by some of you as compromising situations, literary of course, to which some others add untrue things and about which some third parties add slanders. Only when you hear and read some of the ideas and proposals, only when you hear what is said about the University of Kosova, about certain intellectuals and retired political personalities, about the Albanian literary language, about the joint programmes of primary and secondary schooling, about the Albanological studies and, until recently, about the Popular Library of the University, about the national flag, about all these institutions so necessary for a national culture and for the preservation of the national identity of a people, only when you read in a literary newspaper about imposing a tax on the birth of every Albanian child after the fourth, when you see what certain people think of equality in employment or in the use of language and writing, only then does it become clear what truth is spoken about more frequently in these meetings about Kosova and for Kosova. Only then does it become completely clear that your words, repeated again and again in the context of mounting pressure against the alleged threat to the rights, freedom and equality between Serbs and Montenegrins of Kosova, which is dramatized so greatly by such words and expressions of a negative political hue as persecution, tyranny, terrorism, fascism, a pure ethnic Kosova, constitute a special form of intellectual violence, that the final aim is a kind of equality which they have known only too well: it is equality with the sawyers, the charcoal porters, or the peasants who were beaten by gendarmes both when they said and when they did not say "Good morning, sir".

Irrespective of all this, however, your attitude towards the Albanians and Kosova does not extinguish our hopes. I believe that in this anti-Albanian ideology you will be always isolated. The progressive forces of Serbia do not support you. Some of you complain that many intellectuals there display indifference towards calls for such an evaluation of the Albanians of Kosova and that they do not accept the militant predisposition towards the latter. Why should they accept it? Those who have eyes to see and brains to think for themselves cannot stick to your anachronism about Kosova. Your attitude towards the Albanians betrays your own feelings about truth and equality in general. Now it can be seen clearly that when you speak about the Albanians, especially in the joint meetings with the veterans, you frequently grind your teeth when pronouncing the words democracy, freedom and truth, eliminating any dignified content from them. Nevertheless, at the last meeting "About Kosova and for Kosova", in fact, you denied the truth about the Albanians and about some other nations, denied them their equality and freedom, when only you determine its measure, and this measure was clearly explained at the meeting by the playwright and critic Branislav Mihajlovic Mihis!

Although many of you frequently seek inspiration from history, most often mediaeval history and the lives of saints, we cannot say that you respect history as a proven teacher of life. In your speeches about the Albanians today and your imaginings about Kosova in the future, you repeat the mistakes for which this teacher has criticized the Serbian bourgeoisie several times already. What is the reason that you agreed to do something today for which history will reprove you tomorrow? Even if it is in the nature of the bureaucracy, it is not in the nature of writers and others artists to rise against the tide of history. They have frequently understood its course, which up to date has enriched the planet not only with small peoples, but also with great peoples. Listening to the remarks some of you made in the meeting "About Kosova and for Kosova", does it not seem to you that such an attitude is opposed to the future?

In concluding this letter, I want to add something. I believe that every sincere admirer of



your literary works would complain that at this meeting you forgot something writers must never forget: you have forgotten that loyalty towards his own people gives no one the right, even less so to writers, to insult and disparage any people at all and to transform your meetings and your written word into public excitement against that people. In whatever they do, writers must never offend and denigrate other peoples. By so doing they give rise to antagonisms and feuds, which become a terrible burden on their memory. Regardless of their numbers or the misfortunes they have suffered during their history, all peoples have the same values and the same dignity. Writers must cultivate the feelings of respect for everyone and try to nurture them among their own kind. But we must really respect the peoples, in the first place, through our readiness to give them full equality and not just a certain degree of it, and we must not allow anyone to impose his political will on them.

I suspect the patriotism of that writer in whose heart there is room only for his own people. As a rule, such a very small heart is mainly the heart of a pseudo-politician or a bureaucrat, which from time to time will be too small even for his own people. Love for your own people is inseparable from respect for all the peoples, that is, love for mankind.

#### NOTE

\* Abridged from *Borba*, June 10, 1987, June 12, 1987.



## DOCUMENTS

V. CUBRILOVIC

### THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES IN THE NEW YUGOSLAVIA(\*)

The present war (Second World War - ed.), amongst many other questions, presents Yugoslavia with the problem of its minorities... When the creation of Yugoslavia was achieved in 1918, we Yugoslavs won the establishment of borders on the basis of the principle of nationalities. Because of this we lost a large piece of territory which we had dominated ethnically for more than 100 years and took within the borders of our state a large number of other foreign peoples who, thus, became the so-called national minorities. They were from all countries...: Germans, Hungarians, Albanians, Romanians, Italians... After liberation, in 1918, we adopted a very generous stand towards the national minorities, although, in the wars of 1912-1918, some of them took stands that would have justified another attitude on our part...

As to how the Yugoslav national minorities have exploited our generosity and patience, the proofs show that here, as everywhere in Europe, no superior force is able to restrain the aims of certain minorities to link up with their mother countries across state borders. Since before the war, the build-up of separatist aims of national minorities was noticed in all states and in ours, too. They took advantage of all the economic and cultural privileges merely to exploit them as a means for the destruction of the states in which they lived ...

#### **The reasons why the question of minorities in Yugoslavia must be settled**

Besides their disloyal attitudes, there are other profound state reasons which oblige us to utilize this struggle and to settle the question of minorities and their displacement... Democratic Federal Yugoslavia can be sure of peace and development only if it is ethnically pure and has settled once and for all the question of minorities, which are a cause of quarrels between it and the neighbouring states ... In our country, the national minorities have been concentrated in very important economic and strategic positions. For example, seen from the geo-political stand-point..., Vojvodina is a strategic key to the Balkans... Vojvodina is the granary for the whole of Yugoslavia, and it has no Serbs or Croats...

The territories south of the Sava and the Danube, with the wealth of minerals and forests and great hydro-electric potential, offer all the conditions for the construction of a modern industry...

The same is true also of the territories around the Sharr Mountains, populated mostly by Albanians. This zone is traversed by the Balkan rivers which discharge into three seas, and for this reason Kosova and Metohija are considered as the strategic centre of the Balkans. On the other hand, while being the central part of the Balkans, this zone divides Montenegro from Serbia and the two of them from Macedonia. These territories of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia will not have strong reciprocal bonds between them until they have a direct ethnic border. This matter is especially important for Macedonia. The Albanians have the territory of the upper course of the Vardar, while the Greeks have its lower course. We, the Southern Slavs, have only its middle course. Our positions are extremely weak and there can be no question of acting



as Italy did in this War, uniting not only Kosova and Metohija, but also Dibra, Kerçova, Gostivar and Tetova, with Albania. We must not nurture illusions about the question of future development of relations in Europe. This terrible war can hardly be the last. We will remain exposed to all winds, and for this reason liable to the first attacks of any new war. It is my duty to point out that the people who are guiding the fate of these territories now must foresee all possibilities and make sure that the events of this war will not be repeated. The leaders of the old Yugoslavia did not take this into account in 1918 when they kept the national minorities... The fertile plains of Polog, Kosova and Metohija are economically important for us. Around them lie our poor lands, such as Montenegro, Sandjak, Novi Pazar to the north of the Sharr Mountains, and the impoverished masses of Macedonian immigrants, to the south of the Sharr Mountains...

In this report I am deliberately focussing attention on Vojvodina and Old Serbia, because I think that the key to our problem in connection with the minorities lies here ... For us the main issue is how to break up the blocks of minorities in the geo-polically important territories. All the forces of the state should be directed by the Federal Government towards solving this problem...

The possibilities exist for carrying out this plan. Looking at matters objectively, the conditions for this work are very favourable. If in defining the borders of Europe in 1918, (the Great Powers - ed.) proceeded from the stand-point that the question of minorities could be solved through their (voluntary) emigration, the experience of this war showed to all Europe that this is not correct ... The only correct solution of this question is the displacement of these minorities. The Third Reich has pursued a brutal colonizing policy, displacing millions of people from one side of Europe to the other. Moreover, it had prepared plans for the displacement of whole peoples and, through a premeditated colonizing policy, aims to dominate Southeastern and Eastern Europe ... Therefore, it is understandable that our allies, too, will adhere to the view that in this War the question of minorities is settled by means of their displacement ... We, too, will have the right to demand from our allies that the question of our minorities should be solved in this way, by means of their displacement.

In asking our allies to allow us to displace minorities, we will have more right to do this than any other people in Europe. No country in Europe has sacrificed more of its people of one origin than we have. More than 1 000 000 men, women and children were killed in our country in this terrible war, and that is 3 times more than the number of those who fell on the battlefield arms in hand. Most of the blame for this massacre falls on ... the minorities in our country. We must tell our allies this and prove it to them with documents. I am thoroughly convinced that they will understand us and will fulfil our desire ...

The question of minorities is easier to settle by means of deportation during a time of war such as this. The peoples at whose expense this is done are our opponents in this war. They attacked us, not vice-versa. They devastated our regions and deliberately exploited their minorities in the war against us. We have no territorial pretensions against them with the exception of Italy in connection with Istria, Gorica and Gradishka. For this reason, we, as victors, have every right to demand that they accept their minorities from our territory.

This war, with its movement of masses of people, created a preliminary psychosis and the predisposition for displacement. The minorities in our country are conscious of what they have done and, because of this, will not defend themselves for long if we expel them.

When all the elements we have mentioned are taken into account, in general, we have never had conditions more favourable for the settlement of minorities than those at this moment. It depends on the breadth of views, on the understanding and the energies of the persons who decide the destiny of our peoples, whether this question will be solved correctly. I am deeply convinced that they understand the importance of the whole problem and will know how to settle it, and that is why I'm writing these lines.



## **The method of settling the question of minorities in the new Yugoslavia**

When it is taken into account that the only correct solution of the question of minorities for us is emigration, a series of tasks which must be tackled, emerge for us: whether all the minorities should be displaced or only certain peoples; from which regions should a minority be deported first; how should the deportation be organized, and how should the villages and towns they leave be populated. In regard to this I'll present some data :

I am of the opinion that the order of displacement of the peoples should be the following: the Germans, Hungarians, Albanians, Italians and Romanians... From the stand-point of principle, all of them deserve to lose their civil rights in this country. Nevertheless, political reasons require differentiation. After those atrocities which the Germans committed in a number of territories all over Europe, they have automatically lost all rights and for this they should be expelled without mercy... During the solution of the problem of minorities, we must at all costs take over Backa, Kosova and Metohija ethnically, by expelling hundreds of thousands of Hungarians and Albanians from our state ...

Another important question is from which territory should the minorities be removed, first of all. I have already pointed out why the main thing for us is not how many minorities we expel, but where we send them. Those minorities which are dispersed over a number of territories as individual families or small centres of habitation, constitute no danger to us. The big compact groups of minorities in the important economic and strategic border zones present a danger to us. These groups are dangerous especially when they border on neighbouring peoples of the same origin. Proceeding from this view, it is important for us to remove the Germans and Hungarians from Vojvodina and the Albanians from Old Serbia and Macedonia ...

In connection with the question of the Albanians of old Serbia and Macedonia, since we have to take over Kosova and Metohija ethnically and avoid a conflict with the neighbouring Albanian people, we must operate with greater maturity and more tactfully than in Vojvodina. For this reason, we must study carefully which zones should be cleared of Albanians, so we can establish our people there ... If the desired aim is to establish reciprocal bonds between Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia, the ethnic composition in Kosova and Metohija must be fundamentally changed. Metohija must be cleared, first of all, as a border zone, neighbouring Montenegro, and most appropriate for this is its colonization with Montenegrins...

In connection with a more detailed drafting of the plan, it must be accurately defined which villages and districts in Old Serbia and Macedonia must be cleared and the plan must be acted on...

If we agree in principle that the question of minorities in our country can be solved only by means of their displacement and in the manner that we have presented, the problem arises how we can carry this out.

The first thing that must be said is that the war is the most suitable moment for the solution of this problem. Sweeping through states like a storm, it uproots the masses and carries them away. What requires decades or centuries in peacetime, is carried out within months or years during wartime. We must not deceive ourselves, we want to solve this question, and we must solve it now, because it is war ... In the course of war operations, the army, in a planned and merciless way, must clear the national minorities from those territories which we desire to populate with our own national elements. I do not wish to go into detail about how this should be done. If this view is accepted in principle, I will whole-heartedly place my knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Supreme Command of the National Liberation Army and the partisan units for the drawing up of detailed plans. For the time being, I simply point out that ... Metohija, Kosova and Polog must be cleared of Albanians unconditionally.

Besides the clearing by the army during the operation, other means, too, must be



employed, so that national minorities are forced to move. First of all,... they must be deprived of all the rights of a minority... Concentration camps for them must be set up, their possessions must be confiscated, their families must be sent to concentration camps, and at the first opportunity, dispatched to their national states... During the clearing out of minorities, we must give special attention to the intelligentsia and the wealthy social strata ...

### **The colonization of the cleared zones**

The settlement of the abandoned villages and towns with our population is exceptionally important; this is why the interests of the state require that territories abandoned by the minorities should be populated as quickly as possible, so that the whole of Europe will regard the matter as a *fait accompli*.. The economic interests of the state require that these ethnic movements are carried out with the least possible damage to the economic life of our state, therefore, the abandoned lands must not be left untilled, the factories must continue to work and the handicraft shops must not be closed. All this is not easy to achieve. Despite our desire and skill for the organization and rapid carrying out of this work, we cannot avoid temporary economic damage, because of the deportation of national minorities. This must not make us give up our main objective and precisely for this reason we must do everything within our power to reduce the damage as much as possible...

During the colonization, the National Liberation Movement will be facing the same tasks as the government of the Old Yugoslavia was after 1918. The best fighters of the movement were recruited from the passive zones south of the Sava and the Danube and from the poor population to the north of those rivers. The peasants from thousands of devastated villages from Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Dalmatia, Like, Bania, Croatia and Serbia will demand from their leaders compensation for their sufferings, reparations for their destroyed property. And the leaders must give them something. Their settlement as colonists in the abandoned German, Hungarian and Albanian villages will be the best compensation for them. In connection with this, however, we must not make the mistakes we did in 1918. As a rule, the lands and property left by the minorities must be given, first of all, to partisan fighters and all members of the National Liberation Movement. We must proceed from the stand-point that only he who wishes to work the land himself should receive it ... As for the colonization of territories left by the national minorities, it is exceptionally important that the colonization is carried out according to all the international laws and rights. For this reason, the approval of our allies should be sought immediately and efforts should be made now to ensure that they recognize our right to confiscate the property of unfriendly national minorities ...

### **The organization of the work**

We have already stressed the importance of clearing out minorities during operations of the war. Therefore, the role of the army in this work is very great. It must use its armed force to drive the minorities from our territories ... It would be even better if a special section were created and attached to the General Command of the National Liberation Army and the partisan units, with the task of removing the minorities during the war. This section would gather together a small number of specialists with knowledge of the problems of the minorities in our different territories. They would present the necessary scientific material to the Supreme Command and make detailed proposals about what actions should be taken about the different minorities during the war. Right from the outset, before the civilian government is set up, the army, besides the expulsion of minorities, must also undertake the protection of abandoned



property and installations... The army must remain in control even when all matters are transferred to the competence of some ministry or institution. The great amount of work involved in the deportation of national minorities amounting to several million people from our state and the settling of thousands of our inhabitants in the abandoned towns and villages requires the setting up of a special institution which would direct all this activity. This institution, ministry or commissariat should be created as soon as possible... We should not entrust this work to the former officials of the section of the agrarian reform at the Ministry of Agriculture. The people appointed there must understand the importance of the question and be ready to devote all their strength and energies to that major task. For this reason, during the creation of this ministry, which will be temporary, a special order should be issued, enabling the selection of employees from the private and public enterprises. They should be paid well and placed in high posts, and any of them who becomes corrupt, should be mercilessly dismissed...

Apart from the rigorous selection of officials, the control over their work by the national liberation councils should be strengthened. The councils can play a major role in settling problems in connection with the deportation of minorities and settlement of new colonists. The Federal Government should leave a good part of these problems to the national liberation councils in a number of regions. This should be borne in mind now when the directives of our colonizing policy are being drawn up... Apart from the army, the national liberation councils at the base are an important factor for us. During this war, a great revolt has built up among our people against national minorities..., a revolt which is expressed in all our provinces, and our population has attacked them. This great hatred and desire of our masses to settle accounts with the minorities should be exploited in a constructive way. It is not to be turned into anarchy and looting, but ought to serve the state aims which we have presented. Therefore, without delay, we must send the national liberation councils precise directives on how to act and what to do. These councils ought to organize the expulsion of minorities and, likewise, take care to guard the abandoned properties, to sow the fields and protect the factories and handicraft workshops. It would be better if special sections for these matters were created everywhere, beginning from the village councils right up to the highest levels. And right from the outset, we must make known to our people what rights each one has and to whom and for what he is answerable. This is an important matter and could have great value if, in sending directives to the army, Marshal Tito, as Supreme Commander of the National Liberation Army, were to issue special directives immediately to the national liberation councils on how they must act. The matter is very urgent. But the creation of a separate ministry and the application of this plan requires a long time.

The national liberation councils can be useful both for the colonization of the abandoned villages and for the clearing of the minorities from them ... We must find ways and means to involve local peasants in this colonization. These peasants are very difficult to move, but when they settle in a new place, they quickly establish roots there. The national liberation councils throughout our territories will have the duty of recruiting colonists for resettlement...

I have presented only a general outline of the problems of the organization of all the work in connection with the deportation of national minorities and the new colonization. There are still many things which require consideration. This we shall leave to the detailed study of the whole problem. I shall say a few words about the immediate tasks linked with this question which we are already facing. While we are discussing whether or not we should deport the minorities, how and in what ways we should populate the abandoned lands, the flames of the war are spreading throughout our territory. From these regions, in which war operations are being conducted, reports are coming that the masses of our people are mercilessly settling account with those national minorities which were against us. We must direct this sentiment of the people as quickly as possible ...



## Conclusions

My report on the question of minorities would have been much more detailed and extensive. However, the question is so important for the existence of our state that I fear that something might have escaped me. A similar occasion to make our state ethnically pure might not present itself again. These major problems of our days are of great national, political, social and economic significance. With greater or lesser urgency they await their solution. But the problem of minorities is solved now or never.

I hope that the persons who lead the National Liberation Movement will be able to appreciate the importance of this question as I do, and that we shall set about its solution with the same energy and self-sacrifice which characterized us in 1941, in the terrible war for liberation and the creation of the new Democratic Federal Yugoslavia. If this report proves of some slight service to this aim, it has fulfilled its task.

Vaso Cubrilovic  
University Professor

November 3, 1944

## NOTE

\* Abridged from the report of Dr. Vaso Cubrilovic to the supreme leadership of the ANLW of Yugoslavia on November 3, 1944.



## WHAT IS IT THAT IS NOT ALBANIANIZATION ?

"In three consecutive numbers (10, 11 and 12 December 1988), *Politika* has published a reaction of the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers and the Scientific Association of the SR of Serbia to the article "On behalf of higher civic aims" which appeared in *Politika* on November 20, 1988. Afterwards we received a long reply to the article which didn't amount to two full pages, opposing some of their ideas, especially the proposal about how to eliminate the Albanological Institute and a number of faculties at the University of Prishtina. In their reply, the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers and the Scientific Association of the SR of Serbia have taken the opportunity to repeat many of the things which we have read thousands of times for years on end in the press of Belgrade, or have heard in the political, scientific and cultural tribunes of Belgrade about the University of Prishtina, about the collaboration of this university with that of Belgrade, or with the University of Tirana, about the scientific and cultural institutions of Kosova, the equality and the inequality of languages in Kosova, the constitutional position of Kosova as it is today, according to the Constitution of 1974, and as it allegedly ought to be in the future, according to the constitution of the SR of Serbia of 1989, and so on. And so, once again we have a repetition of a "long-play" record about Albanians and about Kosova, but this time drawn from an authoritative institution - the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers and from the Scientific Association of the SR of Serbia.

### The use and misuse of a notion

The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia have found the methodological key to explain the situation in Kosova in the political notion Albanianization (Albanizacija), which they sometime use with a stylistic colouring. Until recently, the notion "Albanizacija" in the Serbo-Croat language was more or less neglected in favour of more politically effective, and therefore, more frequently employed notions such as nationalism, separatism, Albanian irredentism, terror and genocide, which only now, thanks to the merit of the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia, are coming into wide political and propaganda use. The term Albanianization - first used by Serbian poets, was spread by the journalists and, subsequently, by Serbian and other politicians. It is becoming a notion which had to be defined precisely by those who, through their own authority, are trying to give it scientific legitimacy, as the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia are doing ... Ill-defined notions or those of equivocal meaning are most suitable for political and propaganda use and misuse. The said Associations, in fact, have not defined the notion Albanianization, but in its content have mixed up everything: their own opinion, their own sentiments, and their own prejudices about the Albanians. With Albanianization they imply the historical phenomenon which began to operate almost at the same time as the Albanians began to be converted to Islam about the 16th century, if not when they were heard about for the first time in history, and which is still going on in our days ! With Albanianization they imply the phenomenon which extends all over Kosova and includes all fields of its socio-political and cultural life, and which, because of the energy compressed into it, threatens to extend beyond Kosova in all directions !

What are all these things the Associations of the University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia include in the notion Albanianization (Albanizacija) ? In what do they see the Albanianization of Kosova ?



### **About the seals and signatures**

1. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization, first, "in the seals of courts", because, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if the seals of those primary and secondary schools, in which the majority of pupils are of the Albanian nationality, have been made in the Albanian as well as in the Serbo-Croat; because in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if the seals of Kosova courts, in which the overwhelming majority of those who are sentenced are Albanians, are made in the Albanian as well as in the Serbo-Croat language !

2. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia also see Albanianization, "in the signatures of the schools, or the signatures of institutions, or other government bodies", because, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if, as well as in the Serbo-Croat language, these signatures have been written in the Albanian language, too, even in the primary and secondary schools in which the majority of the pupils are of the Albanian nationality, because, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if the signature of the Albanological Institute, in which the historical and cultural conditions of the Albanian people are further studied, is written in the Albanian as well as in the Serbo-Croat language !

3. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia also see Albanianization in the names of schools and streets, because, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if a number of schools and streets have been named after such famous figures in Albanian Culture as Naim Frasheri, Jeronim De Rada, Fan Noli, Luigj Gurakuqi, and historically famous personalities such as Skanderbeg, Hasan Prishtina, Bajram Curri, and Isa Boletini, as well as after outstanding personalities in the history and culture of non-Albanian peoples.

### **About toponyms, ethnonyms and anthroponyms**

4. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see the Albanianization in Albanian toponymy, too, because, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if the Albanians write and, perhaps even if they pronounce the place names as their ancestors have written and pronounced them for centuries, if, for example, they call Gjakova Gjakova, Peja Peja, Ferizaj Ferizaj, as they were called before they were called Djakovica, or Urosevac, or before Han i Elezit was called General Jankovic, that is, as it was called before this general occupied it, and so on.

5. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization also in ethnonymy, because, according to them, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova if the Albanians write and pronounce the names of peoples as their ancestors have done for centuries if, for example, they call themselves *shqiptare*, call the Montenegrins Montenegrins, the Macedonians Macedonians, the Croats Croats, the Hungarians Hungarians, the Germans Germans, and so on.

6. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization in anthroponymy, too. Since, in their opinion, it is a mark of the Albanianization of Kosova when the Albanians more and more infrequently give their children Turkish or Arabic names such as Hasan, Azem, Jakup, Bajram, Naser, Muhamet, while ever more frequently they give them Illyrian or Albanian names such as Agron, Teuta, Genc, Kastriot, Arber, Shqipe, Valbona, Dita, Rozafa, and so on. Thus, today the university teachers and scientific workers of Serbia have begun to see "Albanianization" where the teachers and scientific workers of Macedonia and the political bureaucracy of that Republic began to see it



three or four years ago. Therefore, they see Albanianization, also, in the removal of that *-ic* from Albanian surnames. We believe that the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia know that, apart from rare instances, Albanian surnames do not terminate in *-ic*, or in *-ov*, or *-sky*, which is characteristic of Slavonic surnames. In the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Albanians were compelled to write their surnames with *-ic* at the end, and in some regions where Albanians live, this practice was continued for a while even after the war. Undoubtedly, the members of the Associations know this, but the removal of the suffix *-ic* from Albanian surnames provided for them evidence of the Albanianization of the whole of Kosova.

### **Even architecture is insulted**

7. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see efforts at Albanianization even in architecture. They point to the building of the Popular and University Library in Prishtina as an irrefutable example of the Albanianization of Kosova even through architecture. In their opinion, "the Albanianizing role of the Popular and University Library of Kosova" immediately strikes the eye "of anyone visiting Prishtina"! How many Serbian intellectuals, especially journalists, have stood transfixed before the building as before an artistic diversion! Because, for the university teachers and scientific workers of Serbia, the appearance of this Library "speaks for itself"! In the view of the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia "this building was done in the Oriental style to emphasize a certain fundamentalism of the Islamic Albanians"! Meanwhile, whereas its appearance was intended to emphasize "the fundamentalism of the Islamic Albanians", its roof was allegedly intended to emphasize Albanian nationalism! In the opinion of the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia "the multitude of white domes" on the roof of this building "characterizes Albanian hats (*qeleshe*), i.e. symbols of the Albanian nationality"!

What can we reply to all this?

If it is said that the building of the Popular and University Library in Prishtina was constructed according to the design of the outstanding Croatian architect, that the white domes on its roof are symbols of the human brain and not of Albanian hats, that these human brains, produced in West Germany, were intended to symbolize the human knowledge contained in the books of this library, then the question must be asked: What are the university teachers and scientific workers of Serbia seeing - the building of the Popular and University Library, or some chimera of theirs? The building which houses books in many languages of the world, many Albanians' heads in gypsum, or even the sword of the Prophet, against which the Albanians fought for nearly 500 years?

Unlike the university teachers and other scientific workers of Serbia, who bring up only the appearance of the Popular and University Library of Prishtina as evidence of the "Albanianizing" role of Kosova architecture, some of their students do this on a much larger scale and with many more examples. So, one of them, in his quality as youth leader of Leposavic, sees something resembling this library, with its "Albanianizing" effect, almost everywhere in Kosova. He shouts pathetically before the masses that "the Albanianization of Kosova has gathered such momentum that there is no sphere of life and work in which it has not struck deep roots (...), indeed, even the architecture of the last ten years has lost its regional characteristics. Look at our Health House. Does it not resemble a double-headed eagle? And again the railway station, the post-office, the warehouse, all are built in this same style (...). Can't you see that the roof of the building of social-political organizations at Leposavic has been 'decorated' with hats?" In his imagination, the Health House, the railway station, the



post-office and the warehouse look like the double-headed eagle ! How could the architects have designed them to look like eagles with two heads ? That is not an easy job! And what is more, he says that the building which houses the social-political organizations is "decorated" with hats precisely at Leposavic, where there are virtually no Albanians at all ! Is it true that these buildings resemble the double-headed eagle, that they have been "decorated" with hats, or our youth leader is seeing things in the shape of the terrible double-headed eagle and the unsatiable heads in "gypsum"? What can we reply to all this ?

A famous Croatian writer says that frequently people fail to read what is written and read what they imagine. The same can be said about the reading of architecture. Sometime people cannot see something as it really is, but as it seems to them. In the present time of all-round crisis, these hallucinations are not very difficult to explain: chauvinism is not a normal feeling in the human spirit, it is an abnormal state which accompanies a feverish condition, and this, in turn, gives rise to all kinds of hallucinations !

### On the emigrants

8. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization in the number of emigrants from Albania, too. Not only the professional politicians, but also the army men, the youth, the women, the young pioneers, and now the university teachers and scientific workers have been speaking in recent years about the question of the Albanian emigrants. It is not a surprise that they are speaking about it, since there is no question about which one cannot speak, but the way in which they are speaking is surprising. In different instances, different figures have been given about the number of Albanian emigrants in Yugoslavia.

It is said that there are 100 000, then 200 000, then 250 000 , then about 300 000 and, finally, they reach the number of 400 000! At one of the so-called rallies of solidarity with the Serbs and Montenegrins, a 14-year-old girl in a town of Vojvodina demanded from the rostrum that no more no less than 300 000 Albanian emigrants, who had allegedly crossed the border with the aims of "Albanianizing" Kosova and Yugoslavia, should be sent back to Albania.

The state organs of Kosova on several occasions have given figures which say that a total of 800 Albanian emigrants live here. However, like other truths about Albanians and about Kosova, which the Albanians express, they were not accepted by the bureaucracy; therefore some of the channels of public information in Belgrade continue to manipulate opinion with the number of Albanian emigrants according to the need of the policy of the day. As can be seen, not even these associations accept the only truth about the number of Albanian emigrants, because had they done so, they would not have raised this question in their extensive reply by demanding "the return to Albania of Albanians who have come from that country, or their distribution to other parts of Yugoslavia!" They did not accept the number of about 800 since it apparently did not correspond to the number of Albanians whom it would be well to "send back" across the border or, at least, to settle in other parts of Yugoslavia !

What can be said of such a proposal of the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia ? Let only this be said: the university teachers and scientific workers, especially those who describe themselves with such titles as "citizens of the world", "humanists-internationalists", which Prof.Dr. H.C.Vojislav K.Stojanovic applies to himself, have never been involved in the "sending back" or "transfer" of people. On the contrary, they have always advocated agreement, friendship and living together amongst peoples regardless of their race, nationality, religion or ideological division.



## **The political births**

9. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization in the birthrate of Albanians, too. The question of the Albanian birthrate is the only one in Kosova about which, for some time, they have been speaking more and more loudly and frequently and in ever more pathetic ways. It has been talked about not only by professional politicians, but also by the youth, the fighters, the pensioners and now also by the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia, who have enriched the political vocabulary about the Albanian birthrate with new figurative expressions like "the explosion of the birthrate of the Albanian population."

**Explosion !**

What have some Serbian university teachers and scientific workers not written or said about this "explosion"! Apart from this, according to them, the Albanians of Kosova are doing this as a deliberate diversion for political reasons. As if children are born for political motives ! Or that it is a consequence of Islamic fundamentalism. As if children are born according to the orders of hodjas and priests. Or that it is also a consequence of acceptance of the theory of "Lebensraum", of the occupation of geographical living space. As if children are born to occupy the fields, the forests, the mountain ranges ! Some of these spokesmen go even further and calculate how many Albanians there will be in the year 2000, in 2025 and even in 2050! They do this in order to show to what extent Macedonia, Serbia, Yugoslavia and even Southeast Europe will be threatened by them! So, this means that the living space for 10 million Serbs and even the 21 million inhabitants of Yugoslavia is in danger from somewhat more than 2 million Albanians! When the newspapers publish such tales, this is more or less understandable, but when the university teachers and scientific workers repeat them, this is truly tragic, indeed tragi-comic, since the act of the birth of human beings is never an "explosion" simply for the reason that an explosion is a hazardous phenomenon, while the birth of a human being is a sovereign act from which no religion, ideology or state feels itself in danger. On the contrary, this is a blessed act which all religions, all ideologies and all states describe in terms much more humane than "explosion". For all of them, all the mothers, all the fathers, and especially all the innocent non-existent beings which we call infants, are completely equal.

### **What kind of university does Prishtina need ?**

10. The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see Albanianization in the University of Prishtina. Perhaps for this reason, some of them long ago opposed the founding of this university in the place which, in their opinion then, and perhaps as close to their opinion even today, "was not still suitable for a full secondary school"; hence, this place in the second half of the 20th century was allegedly not as advanced as the Serbia of Knjaz Milos 150 years ago when the Great School was founded. The most far-sighted arguments which were stressed in the past against the founding of the University of Prishtina are "instructive" today and, because of their "instructiveness", they are brought out still ! The first of these arguments is: "We have a place which has a compact territory of a minority with about 3 million inhabitants. It never occurred to anyone to open the university. Likewise, we know of no other country in the world which has opened a university for a national minority, as is the case in Kosova."

The second of these arguments is: Since it was decided to open the University of Prishtina, then it had to be a university "with lessons mainly in the Serbo-Croat language in



which the Albanian language would also be taught!" This means: certain university teachers and scientific workers of Serbia, undoubtedly including the signatory to their reply, "the citizen of the world and outstanding humanist-internationalist", the Prof.Dr.H.C.Vojslav K.Stojanovic, were trying to ensure that the University of Prishtina, which means the university for Kosova, in which the Albanians comprised 73 per cent of the population at that time, would be a university in which the Albanian language will be taught in the same way as ancient Greek, Latin and Japanese are taught at the University of Belgrade, while the other subjects will be studied in the Serbo-Croat language ! In the true spirit of "world civilization, humanism and internationalism"! Perhaps the university teachers and the scientific workers of Serbia, especially the signatory to their reply, H.C.Vojslav K.Stojanovic, bearing in mind the ratio existing then at the University of Prishtina, remind us that "when the question is about the language to be used in the University of Prishtina, it must be said that everywhere in the world, the official language, the language which is spoken by the majority of the population, is used, and, in the case of Serbia as a state, the Serbs make up the majority."

What can we say to all this ?

We can only say this: The outstanding citizens of the world, the humanists and internationalists, have always fought to ensure that all the people of the world can study nature, society and history in the language which they master most thoroughly and which they love most, and can express their knowledge in the language which they master most thoroughly and love most - in the mother tongue. The university teachers and scientific workers, who honour themselves with the titles "outstanding citizens of the world, humanists-internationalists", have not fought for official languages, but for free languages. But this is a time of general crisis, and the crisis has destroyed the humanism of some humanist university scientific workers !

### **A concept as political instrument**

The Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia see the Albanianization effort wherever there are Albanians, in everything the Albanians do, in everything written in Albanian, in everything the Albanians think. This can be put in so many words: in practice, they see it wherever there is the smallest number of Albanians, besides Serbs, let alone where there are only Albanians. In brief, in their opinion, everything Albanian is an expression of Albanianization! Therefore, it can be said that the concept of Albanianization is a political instrument which has one aim: repression, and it jeopardizes the Albanian historical, spiritual and cultural values and the cultural identity and integrity of the Albanian people. This fictitious Albanianization is a clear example of their Albaniophobia. If this were not true, then the proposal to suppress the Albanological Institute and the Popular and University Library of Prishtina, would not have been made, the demand to teach subjects in Serbo-Croat in the University of Prishtina would not have been made, just as the demand to change the names of schools which carry the names of the most outstanding personalities of the Albanian history and culture : Skanderbeg, Hasan Prishtina, Bajram Curri, Naim Frasheri, Fan Noli, Luigj Gurakuqi, and others, would not have been made. Apparently, the university teachers and scientific workers of Serbia forget that the Albanians have their own language and that this language has to exist even in the school and court seals, that they have their own history and culture, and that this history and culture must be demonstrated also in the names of schools and streets, that they have their own national architecture, and quite naturally this architecture should influence the contemporary architecture of Kosova. It seems that they forget that the Albanians are in their own ancestral homeland, where their Illyrian ancestors lived, and for this reason the cultural scene of Kosova has never been and, perhaps, never can be without the features of their culture.



Because they respect and love the Serbian culture in Kosova, as well as all the national cultures in the world, the Albanians have never spoken about the Serbization of Kosova.

Because they respect and love the Serbian culture in general, the Albanians have the right to demand that the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of Serbia should respect their culture and history, likewise. The Albanians cannot have any other history or culture apart from that which they have and of which they are proud.

Let us say also that the claim that "the imposition through violence of the Constitution of 1974 was fatal for Serbia and, thus, for Yugoslavia", does not go in favour of fraternity-unity. It means that the ruler imposed the constitution without collaboration with the parliament, as if in 1974 the SFRY had been to say the least, a monarchy.

Meanwhile, regarding the criticism about the cooperation between the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of the SR of Serbia and the Associations of University Teachers and Other Scientific Workers of the ASR of Kosova, we can say this to our colleagues: we are for the cooperation in which we want to believe there will be no attacks and slanders against individuals, based on street gossip, like those in *Politika* of June 9, 1981, about the president of our Association; we are for the exchange of opinions, for dialogue in which the facts are respected and in which the spirit of respect and friendship is extended and enriched.

#### THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC WORKERS OF THE ASP OF KOSOVA

#### NOTE

\* Excerpts from *Rilindja*, Prishtina, January 11-12, 1989.



## A P P E A L

### OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL WORKERS IN DEFENCE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL DEFENCE AND AFFIRMATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF KOSOVA ON THE BASIS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SFRY, ADDRESSED TO THE ASSEMBLY OF SR OF SERBIA AND THE YUGOSLAV PUBLIC OPINION

Fully conscious that the content and value of the constitutional position of Kosova represents, in essence, the constitutional content and value of the population of Kosova, and so also, the special, real and emotional value of the Albanian population of Kosova;

fully conscious that Kosova is not and cannot be the one national political property of any of its nationalities and any nationality outside Kosova and that even less can it be the Kosova of the Mediaeval or pre-Mediaeval period, or the Kosova of the ratio of forces during the Balkan Wars, or the Kosova of the ratio of forces during the Second World War, but it is the Kosova of the National Liberation War and the socialist revolution, that Kosova is neither Southern Serbia nor Ancient Serbia, according to the reactionary, nationalist-hegemonic concepts of Nikola Pasic and his modern disciples, but the Kosova of all its nationalities, a thing which constitutes one of the most essential components of its individuality;

fully conscious that any reduction of constitutional rights gained by a nationality, a population or an independent and autonomous territory, would be not only an anachronistic act, but also a permanent cause for discontent and a sense of insecurity;

we, the scientific and cultural workers of Kosova, as citizens of the SFRY with inviolable democratic and constitutional rights for the expression of our stand and will, on the occasion of the amendments to the Constitution and, first of all, those which have to do directly with us and about which we have the right to express our opinion, direct this

## A P P E A L

to the Assembly of the SR of Serbia and the Yugoslav public opinion.

1

### TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SR OF SERBIA

On the basis of sound judgement and wisdom, which could not fail to take account of the prevailing disposition and stand of the population of Kosova, expressed in the debate on the Constitution; on the basis of sound judgement and wisdom which could not fail to take account of the other consequences deriving from the expression of the will of the Albanian nationality in Kosova in the mass protests of November 1988, the protests rallies of the working class of last February, in defence of the constitutional position of Kosova and not opposed to the constitutional changes, in general,

we appeal to the Assembly of the SR of Serbia to adopt only those amendments which do not have to do with changes in the relations between the SR of Serbia and the Autonomous Socialist Provinces and to examine other amendments which have to do with these changes, in the sense of more clearly defining the respective constitutional dispositions, which will be carried out during the procedure for the preparation of the new Constitutions. In reference to the



ASP of Vojvodina, the possibility can be envisaged of joint constitutional solutions which will permit a different scale of the structuring of the ASP of Vojvodina within the SR of Serbia, of course, if this is the real desire of the people of Vojvodina and it is expressed in democratic conditions.

We point out once again that the Assembly of the SR of Serbia, with its political wisdom, must bear in mind the attitude and feeling of the population which constitutes the majority in Kosova for the maintenance of the present constitutional position of Kosova. We think that this reasoned Appeal ought to be taken into account precisely for the sake of the long-term relations for which we have always striven.

We point out, also, that, in this way, no constitutional obstruction is caused, because the respective constitutional dispositions remain in force. The party which insists on changes of such a political character, which do not correspond to common interests and sentiments, always takes upon itself the responsibility for the political crisis; the more so when there is insistence on the establishment of relations of dependence between socio-political communities of national dimensions.

## 2

### TO THE YUGOSLAV PUBLIC OPINION

At this serious moment, we appeal to the Yugoslav public opinion, including its political structures and, in the first place, to public opinion in the SR of Serbia, to admit sincerely that our stand and Appeal for the defence and institutional affirmation of the constitutional position of Kosova on the basis of the fundamental principles of the Constitution of the SFRY is legitimate and constitutional. We are inspired by the most precious values of the socialist revolution and the social-political emancipation of all nations and nationalities of new Yugoslavia and, in this context, also, of the Albanian working class and intelligentsia in Yugoslavia. Therefore, the not infrequent calculations and pragmatic political assessments about the alleged lack of information and misinformation of the Albanian people in Kosova in regard to the content and direction of changes to the Constitution represent an underestimation not only of a people, but also of the emancipation of Yugoslavia hitherto. The frequent pragmatic political claims that the Albanians in Yugoslavia are against all constitutional changes are, likewise, speculations and untrue. Meanwhile, it is well-known that the mass demands for keeping the basic principles of the 1974 Constitution unchanged have a political-metaphoric meaning, to avoid changing the constitutional position of the ASP of Kosova, and this is a completely just and legitimate demand.

Allow us to ask any national and any citizen of goodwill: how is it possible and on the basis of what justice will the degree of political self-administration of the Albanians of Yugoslavia be reduced, when in the 1970s, through the common political will, it was enshrined in the Constitution precisely on the basis of the present constitutional position of ASP of Kosova as a community of equal nationalities. We believe that there is no need, on this occasion, to cite the affirmative words of Tito and Kardelj about the present constitutional position of Kosova. We raise the voice of reason and ask: did the legislators of the 1970s and the most outstanding political personalities of that time not know what is the "essence of autonomy" in the given real relations among nations and the national collectives?

Any eventual weakening of the constitutional position of Kosova would give rise to the feeling among Albanians that something, which has not been donated to them, but which belongs to them by right, has been taken from them.

Since it is contrary to the general development of society towards emancipation, the



restriction of the constitutional position of Kosova has an anti-historical character, and since the restriction of the constitutional position of Kosova (as an autonomy built on national foundations) implies the strengthening of the state of one nation at the expense of another, objectively, such a restriction cannot have a humanitarian content.

From all this it results that our stand and Appeal imply self-respect and sincere reciprocal respect between nations and nationalities.

For this reason we consider our Appeal addressed to the Assembly of the SR of Serbia and the Yugoslav public opinion fair, legitimate and reasoned.

In calling on Yugoslav public opinion to support our Appeal, first of all, we call for their sincere understanding. Meanwhile, on the Assembly of the ASP of Kosova devolved the duty and the decisive role for the institutional defence of the constitutional position of Kosova, in the sense of refusing to approve any amendment which would make any reduction of any extent at all, in the rights and duties of the ASP of Kosova and, respectively, would reduce the quality and level of independence of these rights and duties.

Prishtina, February 21, 1989

The scientific and cultural  
workers of Kosova  
(the list of signatories follows)

The APPEAL was addressed: to the Assembly of the SR of Serbia the Mass Media in  
Yugoslavia

It was also addressed : to the Presidency of the SFRY  
the Presidency of the CC of the CLY  
the Presidencies of the republics and provinces  
the Presidency of the Regional Conference  
of the SLWP of Kosova

The signatories of the Appeal of the scientific and cultural workers for the institutional defence and the affirmation of the constitutional position of Kosova on the basis of the basic principles of the Constitution of the SFRY addressed to the Assembly of the SR of Serbia and the Yugoslav public opinion :

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Agim Cavderbasha | 18. Ajri Begu        |
| 2. Abdyl Kadolli    | 19. Ali Laliu        |
| 3. Abdyl Rama       | 20. Ali Aliu         |
| 4. Abdylatif Fusha  | 21. Ali Olloni       |
| 5. Abdyl Krasniqi   | 22. Ali Podrimja     |
| 6. Abdulla Vokrri   | 23. Ali Zatriqi      |
| 7. Adem Limani      | 24. Atdhe Gashi      |
| 8. Adem Rrusta      | 25. Anton Cetta      |
| 9. Agim Deva        | 26. Arsim Morina     |
| 10. Agim Vinca      | 27. Asene Agai       |
| 11. Agni Dika       | 28. Avni Brovina     |
| 12. Agron Dobroshi  | 29. Avni Spahiu      |
| 13. Agron Kerliu    | 30. Bajram Krasniqi  |
| 14. Agron Krasniqi  | 31. Bajram Kabashi   |
| 15. Agron Pustina   | 32. Basri Ibrahimimi |
| 16. Agush Beqiri    | 33. Bedri Bakalli    |
| 17. Ahmet Kelmendi  | 34. Behar Zogiani    |



35. Behxhet Krasniqi
36. Beqir Shkreli
37. Besim Bokshi
38. Binak Kastrati
39. Binak Kelmendi
40. Bujar Bukoshi
41. Burbuqe Pustina
42. Burim Hatipi
43. Dalip Limani
44. Dervish Rozhaja
45. Emine Gashi
46. Emine Halimi
47. Engjell Berisha
48. Enver Maloku
49. Enver Mehmeti
50. Eqerem Basha
51. Elvin Ahmeti
52. Ejupe Pllana
53. Esat Dujaka
54. Esat Mekuli
55. Eshref Biçaku
56. Eshref Osmani
57. Evliana Bajçinovci
58. Fadil Bujari
59. Faik Hima
60. Fatmir Dallaku
61. Faton Agani
62. Faton Hoxha
63. Fazlli Zyferi
64. Fehmi Agami
65. Fehmi Bojaxhiu
66. Fehmi Rexhepi
67. Fellenza Gjinolli
68. Flamure Selimi
69. Flora Brobina
70. Gani Mulliqi
71. Gani Hoxha
72. Gazmend Kalaniku
73. Gazmend Shaqiri
74. Gazmend Zajmi
75. Gani Bobi
76. Halit Ahmetaj
77. Halit Hoxha
78. Halit Ymeri
79. Hajrulla Gorani
80. Haredin Ukelli
81. Hakif Bajrami
82. Hamide Latifi
83. Hasan Ahmeti
84. Hasim Saliu

85. Hivzi Islami
86. Hasni Arifi
87. Hysni Hoxha
88. Hyri Daka
89. Ibrahim Kadriu
90. Ibrahim Rexhepi
91. Ibrahim Rugova
92. Idriz Ajeti
93. Irfan Pashoja
94. Ismet Shaqiri
95. Isuf Berisha
96. Jusuf Bajraktari
97. Jusuf Buxhovi
98. Latif Islami
99. Liman Matoshi
100. Liman Rushiti
101. Lirim Shaqiri
102. Lulzim Agai
103. Lumturie Gashi
104. Lutfi Dervishi
105. Mark Krasniqi
106. Mazllum Belogu
107. Mazllum Hasimja
108. Mehmet Emerllahu
109. Mehmet Gjata
110. Mehmet Gerguri
111. Mehmet Maxhuni
112. Mehmet Kraja
113. Mehmet Surdulli
114. Mensur Pozhegu
115. Muharrem Bajrami
116. Muharrem Bulliqi
117. Muharrem Kutllovci
118. Muharrem Jakupi
119. Muharrem Gashi
120. Muharrem Saliu
121. Muhamed Bllakaj
122. Myslim Milliqli
123. Muslim Abdyli
124. Mustaf Lecaj
125. Murat Blaku
126. Nagip Rexhepi
127. Nazim Oshaja
128. Nehat Islami
129. Nexhat Krasniqi
130. Nexhmi Hyseni
131. Nuri Bashota
132. Nusret Ramadani
133. Orhan Kurtati
134. Osman Imami



135. Osman Zeka  
 136. Qamile Morina  
 137. Qazim Hyseni  
 138. Ramadan Rislimi  
 139. Ramadan Musliu  
 140. Ramadan Jashari  
 141. Rame Myftari  
 142. Ramiz Abdyli  
 143. Ramiz Kelmendi  
 144. Ramush Rama  
 145. Ramush Tahiri  
 146. Raif Aliu  
 147. Rauf Dhomi  
 148. Remzije Balogu  
 149. Rexhep Ismaili  
 150. Rexhep Qosja  
 151. Rexhep Hoxha  
 152. Rexhep Shala  
 153. Riza Binishi  
 154. Ruke Beqiraj  
 155. Rustem Berisha  
 156. Rustem Rugova  
 157. Sabri Hamiti  
 158. Salem Lepaja  
 159. Sabri Bajraktari  
 160. Sami Fetiu  
 161. Sami Beqiri  
 162. Sami Myzolli  
 163. Sami Piraj  
 164. Sali Ahmeti  
 165. Sali Krasniqi  
 166. Sahit Maliqi  
 167. Shadat Mekuli  
 168. Sejdulla Hoxha  
 169. Selim Krasniqi  
 170. Sime Dobreci  
 171. Skender Zogaj  
 172. Sulejman Aliu  
 173. Syle Osmanaj  
 174. Shaban Geci

175. Shaban Hasi  
 176. Shefqet Berisha  
 177. Shefqet Meha  
 178. Shefqet Lulaj  
 179. Shefqet Riza  
 180. Shkelzen Maliqi  
 181. Shkelzen Reça  
 182. Shpetim Dobej  
 183. Shyqyri Galica  
 184. Talat Gjinolli  
 185. Talat Pallaska  
 186. Tafil Morina  
 187. Tahir Neziri  
 188. Tefta Ahmeti  
 189. Teuta Ejupi  
 190. Ymer Aliu  
 191. Ymer Bajra  
 192. Ymer Elezi  
 193. Ymer Koçinaj  
 194. Ymer Jaka  
 195. Vahap Shita  
 196. Veli Plakçori  
 197. Vesta Nura  
 198. Xhavit Bicaj  
 199. Xhavit Kuçi  
 200. Xheladin Shala  
 201. Xheladin Reçica  
 202. Xhemajl Bajraktari  
 203. Xhemajl Mustafa  
 204. Xhemajl Rexhepi  
 205. Xhemil Bytyçi  
 206. Xhevat Hasani  
 207. Zana Bukoshi  
 208. Zenun Colaj  
 209. Zahir Hamiti  
 210. Zejnel Kabashi  
 211. Zejnel Kelmendi  
 212. Zejnulla Rrahmani  
 213. Zekeria Cana  
 214. Zek Gecaj  
 215. Zeqirja Ballata



## RESOLUTION ON THE SITUATION OF KOSOVA - SOUTHERN YUGOSLAVIA(\*)

The European Parliament,

A. Deeply alarmed at the explosive situation on the verge of civil war and the serious disturbances which have set the forces of order against the population of Albanian origin in Kosova, in the towns of Prishtina, Podujeva and Mitrovica of Tito and which, on the 29th of March, after two days of confrontation, claimed many victims;

B. Angered at the repression by the militia and the armed forces, as well as the wave of arrests which is striking many political personalities;

C. Taking into consideration the fear expressed by a significant part of the population of Kosova that the constitutional amendments required by the Serbian Republic will damage its identity;

D. Remembering that the European community maintains close political, economic and financial relations, as well as regular parliamentary contacts with Yugoslavia;

1. Points out that, if there is continuous incitement of nationalist sentiments in Yugoslavia, peace is liable to be endangered there, a thing which is not without grave consequences for Europe.

2. Reminds the Government of Yugoslavia that, in signing the Helsinki Final Act, it has undertaken commitments towards minorities which live in its territory precisely to guarantee their equality before the law and their enjoyment of human rights.

3. Demands the release of political prisoners, as well as the creation of an investigating commission to determine who were the military and civilian persons responsible for causing so many victims.

4. Appeals to the Serbian authorities to display understanding and sympathy towards the grave concern of the Albanians of Yugoslavia and calls on the Albanian majority that lives in the province of Kosova to respect the rights of the Serbian minority.

5. Asks the Commission and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, meeting in the context of political cooperation, to make proper use of the existing contacts and means in the framework of the communication between the Community and Yugoslavia in order to respond to these appeals and to contribute to putting an end to ethnic tensions.

6. Welcomes the invitation which has been issued by the President of the Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, who desires the dispatch of a delegation of the European Parliament charged with studying the situation on the spot, and decides to do whatever is necessary for the preparation of such a delegation.

7. Charges its own President to transmit this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Yugoslav Government.

April 12, 1989

### NOTE

\* Resolution Adopted by the European Parliament on April 13, 1989. Taken from AIH, A-IX-39.



RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS

June 29, 1989

1) The Congress expresses grave concern regarding the actions of the Government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for repeated human rights violations and for its repressive handling of the crisis in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo;

2) urges the Yugoslav government to take all necessary steps to assure that further violence and bloodshed do not occur in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo;

3) urges the government of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia fully to observe its obligations under the Helsinki Final Act and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights to assure full protection of the rights of the Albanian ethnic minority and all other national groups in Yugoslavia;

4) requests the President and the Department of State to continue to monitor closely human rights conditions in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; and

5) calls upon the President to express these concerns of the Congress through appropriate channels to representatives of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.



AMENDMENT TO STATE DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZATION PASSED  
BY THE U.S. SENATE (\*)

July 18, 1989

HUMAN RIGHTS IN YUGOSLAVIA

(a) FINDINGS -- The Congress finds that --

(1) the United States continue to support the independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia;

(2) the State Department's 1988 Country Report on Human Rights Practices cites many human rights practices that violate internationally accepted human rights standards, including infringement upon and abrogation of the rights of assembly and fair trial, freedom of speech and freedom of the press;

(3) the Country Report also indicates that these human rights violations are targeted at certain ethnic groups and regions, most particularly against the ethnic Albanians in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo;

(4) the human rights of all ethnic groups in Kosovo must be preserved;

(5) these human rights violations, in addition to recent actions taken to limit the social and political autonomy of Kosovo, have precipitated a crisis in that region;

(6) the response of the Government of Yugoslavia to that crisis was a police crack-down that led to the deaths of many civilians and police officers, the wounding of hundreds more, and the imprisonment of additional hundreds;

(7) these human rights abuses violate the high ideals of mutual equality, dignity, and brotherhood among all of the nations and nationalities in Yugoslavia, which have been the guiding principles of Yugoslavia since 1945; and

(8) the European Parliament of the European Community has condemned these actions by the Government of Yugoslavia.

(b) STATEMENT OF THE CONGRESS -- THE CONGRESS --

(1) expresses concern regarding human rights violations by the Government of Yugoslavia and its repressive handling of the crisis in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo;

(2) urges the Government of Yugoslavia to take all necessary steps to assure that further violence and bloodshed do not occur in Kosovo;

(3) urges the Government of Yugoslavia to observe fully its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki Final Act to assure full protection of the rights of the Albanian ethnic minority and all other national groups in Yugoslavia;

(4) requests the President and the Department of State to continue to monitor closely human rights conditions in Yugoslavia; and

(5) calls upon the President to express these concerns of the Congress through appropriate channels to representatives of Yugoslavia.

NOTE

\* Taken from AIH, A-IX-40



## EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS

Dr. IBRAHIM RUGOVA

Prishtina-Yugoslavia

### THE SERBS RETURN TO TAKE REVENGE (\*)

*Editor* : This week the Serbs are commemorating with pomp the 600th anniversary of the battle of Kosova Plain in which the Serbian mediaeval empire was defeated by the attack of the Turks: more than 1 million Serbian patriots are expected to attend. Do the Albanians feel that this celebration is a provocation ?

*Rugova* : Naturally, it is a provocation. It is simply a Serbian chauvinist celebration. I would accept the parade if it had to do with a cultural evaluation of this significant battle for the whole of Yugoslavia.

*Editor* : But has it been the Serbian people that fought against the Turks at that time ?

*Rugova* : History has provided adequate proof that Hungarians, Croats, Bosnians and, of course, Albanians also took part in that battle.

*Editor* : But the Albanians were only on the side of the Turks ...

*Rugova* : No, on the side of the Serbian prince, Lazar. After all, in 1389 the Albanians were still Christians and they, too, fought Islam. We adopted the Moslem faith under the Turkish occupation. The chauvinist myth about the battle of Balckbird Plain was created in the 19th century after the birth of the Serbian state.

*Editor* : Do you feel concerned that now there may be bloody clashes again between Serbs and Albanians ?

*Rugova* : Just think one moment: one million excited Serbs will be staying in hotels, boarding houses and even in private homes all over Kosova. They will drink and begin to boast. One wrong word could serve as a spark in a powderkeg.

*Editor* : The Albanians have opened fire on the Serbs. Are they prepared for a civil war ?

*Rugova* : People can't see any other way out. During protests it is always like this. If you are left without an echo, then you must shout with a louder voice.

*Editor* : But who should answer you ? The Yugoslav state Presidency, the Serbian Government ?

*Rugova* : My impression is that there are forces in Yugoslavia which desire precisely terrorist actions in Kosova. If shots are fired from among us, this serves as a justification to step up the repression. And if the resistance of the Albanians against Serbian hegemony can be denounced in foreign countries as terrorism, then it can be calculated that international sympathy for our cause will soon pass. You can imagine who engages in such speculations.

*Editor* : It could be that the Serbs and their leader, Milosevic, hope for advantage from an exacerbation of the conflict. But the Presidency of the state and the Federal government cannot have any interest in a civil war.

*Rugova* : Perhaps so. Then it is high time for them to intervene and stop the Serbian arbitrariness. Part of the strategy of repression is the rehabilitation of the notorious minister of



internal affairs, Rankovic. With this they want to justify the bloody oppression in Kosova in the past.

*Editor* : A short time ago a delegation of the European Parliament visited Kosova to acquaint itself with the situation. The delegates talked with you. Because of this the Serbian press made the accusation that the deputies had demanded contacts only with enemies of the Serbs.

*Rugova* : The opposite is true. The delegates were prohibited from having any contact with the people in the street. Therefore they ended their visit prematurely. The members of the European Parliament got only the official stand : good for the Serbs and bad for the Albanians.

*Editor* : In the spring the Serbs managed to force through a change in the Constitution which gives them more rights in Kosova. You and your associates had demanded a popular referendum about this. In your opinion, what result would such a referendum have given ?

*Rugova* : At the most, 10 to 15 per cent of the electors would have voted for such a change. The people are on the other side.

*Editor* : What has happened to the ten Albanian members of parliament who voted against the limitation of the autonomy of Kosova ?

*Rugova* : The president of Parliament, a Serb, of course, has demanded that these deviators be removed from their posts. Soon they will lose their mandates.

*Editor* : What has changed in Kosova since the coming into force of the new Constitution?

*Rugova* : On the basis of the Constitution five fields - the police, economic planning, justice, territorial defence and international relations, have been placed under central Serbian power. But all the other fields, too, are dominated by the Serbs under the slogan of the "unity of the republic".

*Editor* : What effect does this have ?

*Rugova* : The number of secondary school classes in Albanian language is drastically reduced. This year alone 11 000 Albanian pupils will be forced to finish their schooling when they complete the primary school, according to the motto, "ignorant Albanians are less dangerous".

*Editor* : According to press reports from Croatia more than 200 Kosova Albanians have been "isolated". What does this mean concretely ?

*Rugova* : They are held for three months without trial, without the right for a defence lawyer, and without visits from their relatives. At least 245 Albanians are under isolation arrest: most of them are intellectuals, but there are also factory managers and specialists. Some have been seriously mistreated in prison. The Serbs' aim is to remove possible leaders of the Albanians' resistance. When Rankovic lost Tito's support in 1966 and Rankovic's Serbian followers were removed, they threatened that one day they would return and take revenge. This is what is happening now.

*Editor* : The Serbian newspapers claim that Kosova aims to gain greater autonomy in order to unite with the People's Republic of Albania.

*Rugova* : This is an old propaganda ploy. Most of the Albanians of Kosova have fully accepted their position in the Yugoslav Federation. It must be said, however, that if the oppression continues, then the people will seek a way out.

*Editor* : To whom will they turn ?

*Rugova* : Either in the direction of Albania, or in another direction. During the Rankovic rule hundreds and thousands of Albanians fled to Turkey. Since 1981, 250 000 Albanians have left their land and are living as emigrants in the West or in the other republics of Yugoslavia.

*Editor* : And, likewise, 40 000 Serbs have left Kosova during this period; it is said that they have been driven out by the Albanians.



*Rugova* : That is a lie. Of course there have been quarrels amongst neighbours, but this happens amongst Albanians, too. In reality, the Serbs cannot bear to have Albanians, too, in leading positions. They want to bring time to a halt. Since 1966, we Albanians have been able to gain education in schools and in university (today 90 per cent of the population is able to read and write), and we demand equal rights.

*Editor* : Does the contradiction between the Serbs and Albanians still permit of a peaceful solution ?

*Rugova* : If Serbia goes on suppressing our national identity, then there will be an uprising. I can only warn the Serbs: they, too, are a small people. In the past, whenever a small people has tried to play the role of a power in the Balkans, this has always ended in tragedy for that people.

#### NOTE

\* Taken from *Der Spiegel*, June 26, 1989.



Dr. ZEKERIA CANA  
(Prishtina-Yugoslavia)

## THE STEEL BROOM SPARES NO ONE (\*)

"The Appeal of the 215 has been fiercely attacked. Why is this ? And what were your aims when you wrote and signed the Appeal?"

"The yellow press has presented the Appeal of the 215 in a bad light, as some act of high treason. It is very bad that it was not published in all the newspapers. It has not been published even in *Rilindja*, the only daily in the albanian language ... Crossfire has been opened against the Appeal, simply because Albanian workers of culture and science have signed it. There is nothing questionable in it; however, Sinan Hasani has placed himself in the role of the state prosecutor. Perhaps the well-known writer should be asked : Does he still consider his novel *The Wind and the Oak* (on the basis of which a film of the television series with the same name has been made) his own work?"...

"However, some have withdrawn their signatures from the Appeal."

"Up till now only Dr.Liman Matoshi has done this. As a reward, he was expelled from the Committee of the League of Communists of the Commune of Prishtina and warned of expulsion from the Party. In fact he cut off his nose to spite his face. And from this the wavering 'appellants' learned a very useful lesson about what lay in store for them, regardless of their repentance. And those few intellectuals who did not sign the Appeal are fearing even worse. Other "sins" have been found for them. The steel broom spares no one."

"Nevertheless, measures have not been taken against you. You are working quietly at your job and nobody has touched you, apart from attacking you verbally."

"Who says so ? Legal sanctions are perhaps more tolerable than psychological repression. Can you imagine how a man of my age feels when he has the impression that they are bugging his telephone, reading his mail, holding back his newspapers and even scientific magazines, and, apart from all this, when he senses himself under continuous surveillance ? All these things together are distressing. They kill one's desire to live and work. The Provincial Committee for scientific work did not finance the publication of my manuscript for which I have done scientific work for many years. The manuscript of Dr.Hajrulla Gorani of the Economic Faculty had the same fate. These are no longer sanctions but acts of vengeance."

"How have the 'appellants' got on in isolation?"

"Some time ago I visited Dr.Rexhep Ismaili and my junior colleague, Dr.Muhamet Shatri. They looked as if they had returned from the 'Gulag'. What can Jusuf Karakushi, who signed the decision for their isolation, say about this ? While those in isolation were locked up in jails, the Kosova chief of police declared before TV cameras that the rumours about their mistreatment were pure hostile disinformation. The secretary of the Provincial Committee of the LC of Kosova, Tomislav Sekulic, declared in the magazine *Danas* 'this could not possibly happen in our country'."

"Does this mean that the Albanian intellectuals have been forced to keep quiet ?"

"The democratic right of citizens to freely express their opinions and ideas (however progressive they may be) has been gravely restricted for years for the Albanian intellectuals, and they have been condemned to a silent monologue. This silence over many years was broken with the opening of a public discussion on the Constitutional changes. But this democratic political climate had a short life. After the voting on the Constitutional amendments in the Assembly of Kosova and the proclamation of the new Constitution of the SR of Serbia, the



storm broke out. Those who freely expressed their opinions in the debate about the Constitution to which they were invited, now one by one have to pay a great penalty, and might even be dismissed from work. Tragi-comic scenes are being played in the representative forum of Kosova. The delegate Agim Kastrati was chased from the Assembly, because he called Rexhep Hoxha, the new chairman of the youth organization of Kosova, a creation of Frankenstein's laboratory. A similar fate awaits Riza Luka, and all the other 'rebellious' delegates."

"The institution where you work, the Albanological Institute, has been called a citadel of Albanian nationalism. To what extent is this assessment correct?"

"The label was attached first to the University of Prishtina. For the unitarians and sworn opponents of the policy of national equality and cultural transformations amidst the Albanian nation, the creation of the University has been a thorn in their flesh. In the period before the Brioni Plenum, in the mid-50s, the Albanological Institute was dissolved. It was revived only after the 4th Plenum of the CC of the LC of Yugoslavia. For this reason, it is no accident that immediately after the outbreak of student demonstrations in 1981, the University found itself under attack as the 'citadel of Albanian nationalism'. This harsh description was first made by Milan Daljevic with the powerful support of those who thought like him and nearly all the Belgrade press. After full eight years, the rector of the University of Prishtina, Dr. Stefan Baljosevic, declares: 'It turned out that this diagnosis was correct'.

"In the upsurge of the campaign against the Albanian spiritual and historical heritage, we should not be surprised even by the demand for the dismantling of an institution so outstanding and well-known in the world as the Albanological Institute. It is a fact that Kosova is returning to the situation it was in before Brioni. Now the battle for its complete de-Albanianization is beginning. Thus, while, on the one hand, the dismantling of the Albanological Institute is demanded, on the other, the Institute of Slavonic Studies is being created."

"How do you understand and how do you feel about this differentiation in Kosova?"

"In the name of 'differentiation' a radical purge in depth and breadth is being carried out in the socio-political organizations, the administration, the representative forums, the economic organizations, the social and health institutions, education and culture, the publishing houses, the scientific institutions, and so on. This settling of accounts, unprecedented since the liberation of the country, is destroying the entire structure of cadres for the alleged purpose of setting up a so-called new one. In practice, this means that capable, tested, and worthy specialists in the leading posts will be replaced by mediocre but submissive and obedient beginners. The national structure 'is being improved' through the replacement of Albanian cadres with Serbs and Montenegrins, especially in the economy. It turns out that this was the aim of the isolation of engineers, technologists, economists, jurists, and other specialists. 'None of those who were placed in isolation has returned to his former job or has been given the post from which he had to resign 'voluntarily'. The final aim of these police 'preventive measures' is to create a suitable terrain and all the premises for carrying out a plan carefully elaborated in advance for the integration of the industrial giants of Kosova (Electro-economy, Trepçe) into the economic system of Serbia. It requires no great imagination to understand that, in this way, the movement is towards the restoration of an economic policy according to the metropolis-colony model ..."

"Blood has been spilled in Kosova. To use the journalese, there were victims on both sides. The security forces replied to attacks with fire. The bloodshed in Kosova is mentioned in various tones."

"And how can we fail to mention it when the blood of young men and women has been shed? Did things have to reach this point? Official reports say that an armed uprising broke out in Kosova and that the militia were subjected to an armed attack and, therefore, were obliged to use extreme measures in self-defence. But, what can be said: about the fact that only two of



the security forces were killed, while the number of the demonstrators killed will perhaps never be known ? Bloodshed was caused in Georgia, too. Many institutions and youth organizations in Yugoslavia condemned the violence in China. In terms of the percentage of the population, the number of victims in Kosova is no less than that in the distant China. Nevertheless, no voice of regret and protest was heard.

Thus, abroad we are interested in a humane and civilized society and in the protection of human lives, while in our own country we approve of the violence and maintain an indifferent attitude towards its victims.

"The latest demonstrations in May were given a new description: they were no longer 'escalation of Albanian nationalism and separatism', but 'a destructive outburst of terrorism and savagery'. If anyone is interested in the truth, it is like this: on the first night the students gathered in their centre, singing and shouting slogans, while the organs of public security only blocked the entrance, but did not intervene. In fact, they had no reason to do so, because the youth did not take a step outside the campus. However, on the second night (when the members of the European Parliament had left Prishtina), the militia went into action. Not content with dispersing the students with tear-gas and clubs, they used the ultimate 'necessary' measures, pursued students into the hostels and attacked them wherever they caught them, in the corridors and rooms. This was an act of classical vengeance. In face of this, the students of the fifth block erected a barricade, at the entrance of the fifth storey, with beds, doors and whatever else they could find. Meanwhile, Baljosevic, from his rector's armchair, declared to the reporter of Belgrade TV that the students had smashed the doors and windows and destroyed the furniture. In his view, this was 'terrorism and savagery'."

"You mentioned the members of the European Parliament whose meeting with the Albanian intellectuals in the Grand Hotel has been assessed in different ways. What is really hidden behind this meeting?"

"Some phenomena and events must be examined in their close connection and their historical continuity. It would not be wrong to make a parallel between the years 1913 and 1989. During the time of the Balkan Wars, when reports about the persecution of the 'liberated' population were reaching European cabinets, Nikola Pasic, the head of the Serbian Government, did not allow foreign journalists to go to Kosova and Metohija. Nevertheless, he was unable to stop the truth getting out about the condition of the Albanians and Macedonians under Serbian rule. For its part, the Assembly of the SFRY did not refuse to welcome the members of the European Parliament, but it cut off their possibility of informing themselves fully on the spot. Of course, the delegation of the European Parliament departed from Prishtina prematurely, completely dissatisfied and offended. However, this possibly told them more than they could have learnt from their talks with Albanian intellectuals or some delegates of the Assembly of Kosova ..."

"Why, then, all the talk of genocide in Kosova, when all the official documents say that the Serbs and the Montenegrins are emigrating under the pressure of Albanians?"

"This tale is an old one, dating back more than a hundred years. We all know what genocide is and with what means it is carried out. Nevertheless, during the last eight years, it has become commonplace to use any case of quarrels, deliberate damage, threats, excesses, rape and some fights to create the impression of genocide, or at least to describe the crimes as having been committed from national motives. However, should the rape of an 11-year old girl (from the Albanian nationality) by a 77-year old man in Podujeva, the physical assault on a school-girl of the 7th grade in Titograd, the stoning of an old man in Verusha by a group of young hooligans of Montenegrin nationality, or the mistreatment of a woman in the 'Belgrade' store in Titograd, be called acts of genocide?"

"All of us are interested that peace should prevail in Kosova instead of intra-national frictions and open conflicts. How can this be achieved ? Can people live together in peace in Kosova ?"



"The answer to this very complicated question requires a lot of space. It is an indisputable fact that, in Kosova, the old bridges of communication are being destroyed, and the foundations of coexistence, relations of good neighbourliness, mutual respect and aid have been undermined. The historical credo that the people must share together good and evil has been brutally demolished. Future scientific studies will show more clearly who has committed this crime. But what must be done from now on, so that from these cold, indeed I would say, frozen intra-national relations a more or less normal climate is created ? It is absolutely certain that this change does not depend solely on the nationality which comprises the majority in Kosova. It is no longer an active subject. The freshest example is the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosova which assumed the character of a Serbian celebration, thus violating the historical fact that all the peoples opposing the Turkish invasion took part in that battle. They made it seem as if the others were on the opposite side, the side of the enemy.

"Second, all this took place in an atmosphere of exaltation about the golden age of the Serbian people, the flowering of the Nemanja state and the conquests of Tsar Dusan. Money was poured out lavishly in conditions of general poverty, when, for example, the hospitals in Kosova have no drugs. This imposing gathering with ovations for 'Serbian Kosova' and with a strong smell of incense took place under the sounds of the 'Heroica' of Beethoven, which here was performed under the baton of a Balkan conductor in home-made ox-hide shoes. On the TV screens in Belgrade, the slogan appeared : 'Without the past there is no future.' This was a call to defend the historical claims of Serbia, the 'cradle' of which supposedly is 'holy' Kosova. I would dare to say that this was an irritating, indeed, a provocative exercise. In this area, throughout the Turkish enslavement, the armed resistance of the other population, the old native population, never ceased until in the 19th century and the beginning of this century when the greatest uprisings of the Albanian people broke out. And the Serbs did not take part in them.

"It must be admitted that the forces which have polluted the climate in Kosova with dangerous poisonous gases are still powerful and destructive. What is going to stop them and bring them to their senses ? Perhaps a new Brioni Plenum ?! But perhaps for this we have still to wait. While they talk about the creation of a common front of nations and nationalities and about coexistence in Kosova, we all remember the well-known legend about the building of castle of Shkodra on the Buna River."

#### NOTE

\* Excerpts from the interview for *Nedelna Dalmacija*, July 23, 1989.



## CHAPTER 7

### THE DECLARATION OF KOSOVA'S INDEPENDENCE

Prishtina, July 2, 1990

#### CONSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF KOSOVA(\*)

Proceeding from the resolutely expressed will of the majority of the people of Kosova, a will sublimated in the Declaration of the Academy of Sciences and Art of Kosova on the new constitutional position of Kosova, proceeding from the role and position of the Assembly of Kosova as a supreme representative and constitutional organ of power and self-government in Kosova, the Assembly of Kosova solemnly proclaimed the following :

#### CONSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION

On Kosova as an independent and equal entity within the framework of the Yugoslav federation (confederation) and as an equal subject with its counterparts in Yugoslavia.

1. This declaration expresses and proclaims the original constitutional stand of the people of Kosova and of this Assembly as an act of political self-determination within the framework of Yugoslavia.

2. Proclaiming Kosova an equal entity in Yugoslavia on the basis of the principles of authentic democracy, respect of the will of the people and human and national groupings, this Assembly is waiting for the confirmation of this constitutional act in the Constitution of Yugoslavia with the full support of democratic Yugoslav and world opinion.

3. This Assembly confirms Kosova as a political-constitutional community and its new constitutional-political position as a common constitutional-political position of all citizens and equal nationalities in Kosova, where the Albanians, as the majority of the population and one of the most numerous peoples of Yugoslavia, as well as the Serbs and others living in Kosova, are considered a nation-people and not a nationality (national minority).

4. In the meantime, until the final juridical implementation of this Constitutional Declaration, the assembly and the organs of power of Kosova base their relations with the constitutional order of Yugoslavia in the Yugoslav Constitution in force and not in the amendments to the Constitution of the SR of Serbia of 1989, which annul the decision of the Assembly of Kosova of March 23, 1989, on approval of these amendments.

5. Until the proclamation of the new Constitution of Kosova, the Assembly of Kosova is to use this nomination for public communication, naming itself the organ of a socio-political community, which is Kosova.

(Signed by all 114 delegates)

Prishtina, July 2, 1990

#### NOTE

\* Taken from the newspaper "Rilindja", Prishtina, July 3, 1990, p.3.



## **DECISION ON THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA (\*)**

Proceeding from the centuries-old progressive, freedom-loving and democratic traditions of the Albanian nation and the members of other nationalities in the Republic of Kosova,

proceeding from the liberation wars and the common antifascist war for survival and defence of independence as a nation,

aiming to ensure general well-being for the people, humanitarianism and freedom, equality and justice for the present and the coming generations,

aiming to establish a democratic society with ever higher living standards, with a progressive education, science and culture and with an all-round development of the personality of the individual,

proceeding from the right of a people to freely choose, when and how they wish, their political standpoint and order, and to exercise their right for an independent economic, social and cultural development,

proceeding from their right to freely use their natural assets, resources and individual means for existence and development,

proceeding from the aim to set up a democratic juridical state, on a juridical and social base, which would ensure and guarantee national rights, the freedoms and rights of the individual, social justice, solidarity, well-being, individual and social development, and the dignity of man,

guaranteeing full rights to the members of other nationalities living in the Republic of Kosova,

fulfilling their wish to proceed on their own free will on the road of democracy, social justice, peace and friendship between the peoples,

proceeding from the concept that the will of the people is the foundation of state power and the fact that it has been expressed in a plebiscite for self-determination of the political-juridical order,

the Albanian nation and the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, in conformity with the principles of democracy and equality and on the basis of the right of self-determination up to secession,

guaranteeing full human and citizen's rights for all individuals,

on the basis of the INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION OF JULY 2, 1990

**PROCLAIM**

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA.**

### **NOTE**

\* Taken from the brochure: "Constitution of the Republic of Kosova", September 1990.



September 7, 1990

## **CONSTITUTIONAL LAW ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA (\*)**

### **1. Implementation of the Constitution of Kosova**

#### **Article 1**

The Constitution of the Republic of Kosova comes into force on the day of its proclamation by the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, if there is no law on another form of application of any of its dispositions.

### **2. Implementation of the dispositions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova on the organs of the Republic**

#### **Article 2**

The dispositions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova which have to do with the composition and organization of the Assembly and the Government of the Republic of Kosova come into force on the day these organs are convened.

The present Executive Council is to carry out the functions of Government of the Republic of Kosova until the convention of the latter on the basis of the dispositions in force.

The dispositions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova which have to do with the Presidency of the Republic of Kosova come into force on the day of its formation. The Presidency is formed at least 10 days before the Assembly of the Republic.

The dispositions of the Constitution on administration and organs working in the interests of the Republic come into force upon the creation of the latter. Prior to that these functions are carried out by the present organs of administration and other respective organs on the basis of the dispositions in force.

#### **Article 3**

The election of deputies to the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, and of the chairman and members of the Presidency of the Republic of Kosova will be held on November 29, 1990.

The first meeting which will form the new Assembly of the Republic of Kosova will be held before December 10, 1990.

The chairman, or if this is not possible, the deputy chairman, or at least 10 delegates of the present Assembly, call the first meeting.

The chairman, or in case this is not possible, the deputy chairman of the present Assembly, or a delegate authorized by the delegates who have called the meeting, chairs the first meeting of the Assembly until the election of the chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova.



#### Article 4

Upon its formation the Assembly of the Republic elects the head and members of the Government of the Republic.

The Government of the Republic is formed and starts its activity on the day its members, the ministers, are elected.

### **3. Implementation of the dispositions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova on the assemblies of communes and the City**

#### Article 5

The dispositions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova on the composition, organization and competences of the assemblies of communes and the City of Prishtina, and their executive organs, come into force on the day of the formation of these organs on the basis of the Constitution and the law and of the election of their members on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova and the statutes of communes and the City.

The assemblies of communes and the City, the executive and administration organs continue their activity with the present composition, within the competences they have in conformity with the dispositions in force, until the formation of these organs.

#### Article 6

The election of deputies to the assemblies of communes and the City will be held no later than November 10, 1990.

The new assemblies of communes and the City will be formed no later than November 28, 1990.

#### Article 7

The statutes of communes and the City are to be proclaimed until October 5, 1990.

On decision of the assemblies of communes and the City and in conformity with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova and the statute of communes and the City, until October 5, 1990, the assemblies of communes and the City will define the number of deputies to be elected in conformity with the Constitution, the law and the statute.

### **4. Harmonization of the laws and other dispositions with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova**

#### Article 8

The other laws and dispositions in force are to be harmonized with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova within the term defined by this law.

#### Article 9

All laws in force which are not in conformity with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova are to be harmonized with the latter until May 31, 1991.



## Article 10

The dispositions on the implementation of the laws in force are to be harmonized simultaneously with the laws of republics and no later than two months after the harmonization of the respective laws.

The laws of the SR of Serbia which regulated all relations are to be applied in the territory of Kosova until the proclamation of the laws of the Republic of Kosova no later than March 31, 1991.

## Article 11

The dispositions of this Constitution on the unalienable rights of workers, on the management of economic enterprises, other organizations and institutions, come into force immediately after the harmonization of the other laws and dispositions with this Constitution.

## Article 12

The disposition on the organs and assemblies of communes and the City of Prishtina are to be harmonized with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova as well as other laws and dispositions no later than June 30, 1991.

## 5. Other dispositions

### Article 13

Upon the proclamation of the Constitution of Kosova, the Chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova will proclaim the elections for deputies to the assemblies of socio-political communities and will take all measures for them in conformity with the election law.

Immediately after the proclamation of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova, the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova is to proclaim the law on political parties and the election law.

### Article 14

The mandate of delegates to the Assembly of the Autonomous Socialist Province of Kosova and those of assemblies of communes ends on the day of the verification of the mandates of deputies to the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova and of the deputies of assemblies of communes and the City elected in conformity with the Constitution.

### Article 15

This law comes into force on the day of its proclamation.

(September 7, 1990)

## NOTE

\* Taken from the brochure "Constitution of the Republic of Kosova", September 1990.



July 11, 1991.

## **RESOLUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA (\*)**

The People's Assembly is following with great concern the dramatic development of events in neighbouring Yugoslavia, and especially the great danger threatening Kosova and the Albanian population living on their own territories in Yugoslavia, where the Great Serb national chauvinistic dictatorship, through its constant provocations and armament of the Serbs and Montenegrins is preparing a bloody massacre against the Albanians.

We support all efforts of the European Community and the CSCE to find a peaceful solution to the question of the future of the Yugoslav state and consider it necessary to reconfirm our full support for the demands of the Albanians for equal social and human rights with all the other peoples of Yugoslavia.

The Albanians are the oldest people in Yugoslavia, the third biggest in number in that country, counting over 3 million inhabitants. On the basis of international acts, they cannot be treated as a national minority. They must have the inalienable right to decide on their own future in conformity with the Helsinki documents, the UNO Charter and the other acts recognized by Yugoslavia itself.

Conscious of the importance of the correct solution of this question, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania declares that :

1. The status of a republic within the framework of a new Yugoslavia must be recognized to the Albanians of Yugoslavia.

2. No question which has to do with the future of Yugoslavia can be solved without the participation of the legitimate organs of the Republic of Kosova, which express the will of the Albanian people of Kosova.

3. The time has come for international action to be undertaken to stop the hand of red terror and crime on the part of Serbia and the Serb state for a new massacre in Kosova. Such a genocide against the Albanian population of Kosova and other Albanian regions in Yugoslavia would give rise to a struggle for existence on the part of the Albanian people of these territories and would cause the reaction of the entire Albanian nation. It could have unpredictable consequences for the destabilization of the situation in the Balkans and Europe.

4. The Parliament of the Republic of Albania calls on all international organisms such as CSCE, the United Nations, as well as on all the parliaments of European countries, the United States of America and the world, to commit themselves to finding a peaceful and democratic solution to the disagreements between the various nationalities of Yugoslavia, where the Republic of Kosova will be equal with the other republics of that country.

The legitimate will of the Albanian people of Kosova is undeniable.

July 11, 1991

THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

### **NOTE**

\* Taken from the newspaper "Zeri i popullit", July 12, 1991.



September 22, 1991.

## **THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA - A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT STATE (\*)**

- The Resolution of the Assembly of Kosova -

The meeting of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, chaired by its vice chairman, Iljaz Ramajli, was held in Prishtina on September 22, 1991. The number of the delegates present was sufficient for final decisions to be taken. Since Sunday Mr. Iljaz Ramajli is the Chairman of the Assembly of the Republic.

The agenda, made up of 10 points, approved also by the Interparty Council of Kosova, included many questions which had to do with the discharge and appointment of the Chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, the deputy chairman, the general secretary and other decisions. The report of the Commission for Elections and Appointments was held first, suggesting that there must be three deputy chairmen instead of two. The delegates agreed, saying that the present situation calls for the commitment of a third deputy chairman, too. Thus, the former two deputy chairmen, Hakia Hadrovic and Iljaz Ramajli, were discharged, and Dr. Skender Skenderi and Ramadan Kelmendi were elected as the new two deputy chairmen of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova. The third deputy chairman, who is to deal with economic questions, is to be elected at the next meeting. The Assembly also discharged Joze Bozovic from his function of chairman and elected Iljaz Ramajli as the new chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova. Hamit Muharremi was appointed general secretary of the Assembly. The delegates elected Xhemali Bajri as head of the Chamber of Communes.

One of the points on the agenda was the law on the completion of the constitutional law on the enforcement of the constitution of the Republic of Kosova, i.e. about several dispositions which give the Assembly the right to pass some of its decisions over to the temporary multi-party government, so that all respective organs and institutions of the Republic of Kosova are activated.

Thus, in case of a direct threat of war of occupation against independence and territorial integrity, the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, with its present members, in agreement with the political parties, can elect a temporary coalition government of the Republic of Kosova. The delegates agreed on this point of the agenda, demanding from the Interparty Council to compile the list of candidates for the coalition government as soon as possible.

The meeting also discussed and unanimously approved the resolution which proclaims the Republic of Kosova a sovereign and independent state, with the right of constitutional participation in the league of sovereign republic-states of Yugoslavia on the basis of freedom and full equality. This resolution informs the other republics of Yugoslavia, the European parliaments and governments, the parliamentarians and governments of the permanent member countries of the Security Council of the United Nations, the public opinion of the country and the world, that the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, on the basis of its constitutional rights, decided to hold a pan-popular referendum, in which, through their own free and direct will, the people of Kosova will declare the Republic of Kosova a sovereign and independent state with the constitutional right of participation in the league of sovereign state-republics of Yugoslavia. The people will have to express themselves pro or con the Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova. The referendum is to be held from September 26 to 30 of this year. The commission has the duty to organize the Referendum, while the Coordinating



Council of the Political Parties of Kosova is required to organize the participation in the referendum of people temporarily working abroad.

September 22, 1991.

**NOTE**

\* Taken from the newspaper "Zeri i popullit", September 24, 1991.



TIRANA, Septembre, 28 1991.

## **THE DECLARATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA(\*)**

The government of the Republic of Albania hails and supports the Resolution of the Assembly of Kosova which proclaims the Republic of Kosova a sovereign and independent state, with a constitutional right in the league of the sovereign republic-states of Yugoslavia, on the basis of freedom and full equality. This decision is an authentic expression of the aspirations of the Albanian people and nation living on their own territories in Yugoslavia, who make up the third biggest population of that country, for the same rights that the other nationalities and peoples of Yugoslavia enjoy. It is the logical result of the decisions of the Kaçanik Assembly of September 7, 1990 on the proclamation of Kosova a republic.

The road this Assembly defined, on the basis of its constitutional legal rights, to hold the pan-popular referendum, is profoundly democratic and in conformity with the Yugoslav constitution, international documents, the Final Helsinki Act, the Charter of Paris and the right of peoples to self-determination. The government of the Republic of Albania considers this free and direct expression of the will of our brothers in Kosova legitimate and hopes that it will be supported by the other Yugoslav republics, the European states and the entire international community.

Respect for the free will of the Albanian people to proclaim the Republic of Kosova a sovereign and independent state with a constitutional right in the league of sovereign republic-states of Yugoslavia is a real contribution to the correct solution of the Yugoslav crisis.

Tirana, September 28, 1991

### **NOTE**

\* Taken from the newspaper "Zeri i popullit", September 29, 1991.



## A POLITICAL DECLARATION

1. The unsolved Albanian national issue in Yugoslavia is the result of the partition of Albanian ethnic territory, when with the foundation of the Albanian state in 1913, more than half of the Albanian nation remained outside the state in compact ethnical territories where they have never realised their legitimate national rights neither under the monarchy of Yugoslavia nor the socialist state of Yugoslavia.

2. When drawing state borders the partitioning of Albanian territories was made ignoring ethnical principles and the will of the Albanian people. This also continued in Yugoslavia where Albanians were divided between the political and administrative borders of Kosova, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro. Albanians enjoyed certain political autonomy in Kosova guaranteed by the Constitution of 1974 which is still lawful and states that Kosova is a constituent element of the Yugoslav Federation.

3. In 1989 Serbia, contrary to Yugoslav constitutional principles, abolished Kosova autonomy, all national rights and the right to sovereignty and subjectivity for the Albanian people, removed them from all state institutions, dissolved both Assembly and Government of Kosova as well as all District Assemblies. Serbia has prohibited schooling in the Albanian language, declared the Serbian language and the cyrillic alphabet as the official medium in public communications, and has sacked more than 80,000 Albanians from their jobs.

4. As an expression of disagreement towards the situation the Albanian population have organised peaceful protests, workers strikes and general strikes in which half a million people have participated. Serbian authorities have reacted violently. They have killed more than 100 Albanians, wounded 300 and more than 12,000 have been jailed a given long-term sentences. Over 600,000 have passed through police procedures.

5. Realising that Yugoslavia was an unsuccessful model of solving the national question in Balkans, members of the Kosova Parliament on the 2nd of July declared independence and on the 7th of September 1990 declared Kosova a Republic. This was a logical solution of state organization of Kosova as a political and territorial unit where 90% of the entire population are Albanians and other nationalities comprise 10%.

Albanian political parties in Yugoslavia, as the legal representatives of the political will of the Albanian people, and who are committed to the peaceful and democratic solution of all issues based on the people's right to self-determination in accordance with the CSCE Paris Conference, have committed themselves to these following options on solving the Albanian issue in Yugoslavia:

a) If external and internal borders of Yugoslavia are not to be changed then the Republic of Kosova should exist as a sovereign and independent state entitled to join the Commonwealth of the New Sovereign States of Yugoslavia. Thus Albanian people remain in the areas of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro should be entitled to the national statute with all relevant rights.

b) If the external borders of Yugoslavia remain unchanged but the internal borders are altered, then the demand is that the Albanian Republic in Yugoslavia be founded on both ethnic principles which apply to Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and other nations in Yugoslavia.

c) If external borders in Yugoslavia change then the Albanian in Yugoslavia through a general declaration with plebiscite will decide for territorial unification with Albania - so by creating an integral Albanian state in the Balkan with ethnic boundaries.



Albanian political parties declare that the political will of the Albanian people expressed in the referendum organized in Kosova on the 26th-30th of September 1991, which declared Kosova as a sovereign and independent republic, is a real force which can not be ignored by anybody. The crisis in Yugoslavia began in Kosova with the expression of dissatisfaction shown by the Albanian people with regards to their plight and therefore will never end without the participation of more than three million Albanians in Yugoslavia. Albanians, about seven million of them, as an autochthonous nation with European tradition, were, are and will be a factor of great importance in the stability of the Balkans and Europe as a whole.

Coordinative Council  
of Albanian Political  
Parties in Yugoslavia  
President - Dr. IBRAHIM RUGOVA  
Prishtina, October 12, 1991



# **THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA IS RECOGNIZED AS A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT STATE**

## **DECLARATION**

### **of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania (\*)**

The People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania read the resolution of the Central Commission of the Assembly of Kosova which reflects the complete success of the referendum on approval of the resolution of this Assembly, proclaiming the Republic of Kosova a sovereign and independent state on the basis of freedom and full equality with all the other peoples. The People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania considers the resolution fully correct, legitimate and based on the principles of the fundamental international democratic documents such as the UNO Charter, the Final Helsinki Act and the Paris Charter. The People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania also read the decision on the creation of a new Provisional Government of the Republic of Kosova headed by Dr.Bujar Bukoshi.

Through this historic deed, the people of Kosova, as the oldest and third biggest population living on their own territories in Yugoslavia, and their legal organ of power, the Assembly of Kosova, will continue to make their contribution to the solution of the Yugoslav crisis with democratic means and to the consolidation of the democratic spirit, security and stability in the Balkans and Europe.

The People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania recognizes the Republic of Kosova as a sovereign and independent state based on freedom and full equality with all the other peoples. It also recognizes as legitimate the New Provisional Government of the Republic of Kosova headed by Dr.Bujar Bukoshi. It calls on international democratic opinion and the CSCE member countries to recognize and respect the legitimate will of the Albanian people of Kosova. This would be another proof of their sincere and unprejudiced commitment to the correct solution of the Yugoslav crisis.

**PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

#### **NOTE**

\* Taken from the newspaper "Zeri i popullit", October 22, 1991.



REPUBLIKA E KOSOVES  
Republic of Kosova  
QEVERIA E REPUBLIKES  
The Government of the Republic

LETTER TO THE EXTRAORDINARY EPC  
MEETING OF BRUSSELS (Dec. 16, 1991)

The Honorable

December 21, 1991

Your Excellency,

Pursuant to the Declaration on Yugoslavia passed in an Extraordinary EPC Ministerial Meeting held in Brussels on the 16th of December, 1991, we do, hereby, present this document requesting the formal recognition of the Republic of Kosova as a sovereign and independent state. This official request was mandated in a meeting of the Government of the Republic of Kosova held on December 20, 1991.

Therefore, in accordance with the guidelines put forth by the December 16, 1991, Declaration on Yugoslavia we solemnly state :

1) THE PEOPLE OF KOSOVA WISH TO BE RECOGNIZED AS AN INDEPENDENT STATE

**A.) Independence is Right.**

I.) Kosova was constitutionally defined as a sovereign territory in the First National-Liberation Conference for Kosova on January 2, 1944 -- known as the Bujan Resolution - and mandated in law by Yugoslavia's Federal Constitution passed in 1946.

II.) An amended federal constitution was adopted in 1974 that preserved Kosova's autonomous status and described the province as one of the eight constituent territorial units of the Yugoslav Federation.

III.) Kosova's autonomy was abolished with the unlawful adaptation of an amended constitution, March 23, 1989.

IV.) Subsequent action was taken by the Assembly of Kosova which declared its sovereignty by approving a Declaration of Independence on July 2, 1990.

V.) The Assembly of Kosova proclaimed a Republic of Kosova and adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova September 7, 1990 based on the principles of self-determination, equality and sovereignty.

**B.) Independence is the will of the people.**

I.) A popular Referendum was held in Kosova September, 26 through 30, 1991.

II.) In this Referendum the people of Kosova overwhelmingly voted to declare independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, confirming the aforementioned actions taken by the Assembly of Kosova :

- a.) 87.01 percent of those eligible to vote cast their ballots, in which
- b.) 99.87 percent voted in favor of independence.



II. THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA ACCEPTS ALL COMMITMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS REQUESTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AS PRECONDITIONS FOR THE FORMAL RECOGNITION OF YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS WISHING TO BE RECOGNIZED.

III. THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA ACCEPTS THE PROVISIONS LAID DOWN IN THE DRAFT CONVENTION INCLUDING THOSE IN CHAPTER II ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF THE NATIONAL OR ETHNIC GROUPS. UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE CONFERENCE ON YUGOSLAVIA.

A. The government of Kosova specifically embraces Chapter II on Human Rights and the Rights of National or Ethnic Groups including : Article 2, Section A.) on Human Rights; Section B.) on the Rights of Members of National or Ethnic Groups; Section C.) on Special Status; and Section D.) on General Provisions.

B.) The Government of Kosova also embraces the instruments referred to in Chapter II, Article 2, Section A, Sub-section 1;

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of the United Nations;

2. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Charter of Paris for a new Europe and the other CSCE documents relating to the Human Dimension, in particular the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE and the Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE;

3. The Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Protocols to that Convention.

IV. THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE GENUINE EFFORTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE CONTINUATION OF THE CONFERENCE ON YUGOSLAVIA AND EMPLORES THE EC TO GRANT LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVES OF KOSOVA FULL AND EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS.

V. THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA EMPHASIZES THAT IT HAS NEVER INITIATED, NOR DOES IT EVER INTEND TO INITIATE EXTRA - TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TOWARDS A NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITY STATE, OR THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS OR INTENDS TO INITIATE HOSTILE PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES AGAINST A NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITY STATE, INCLUDING THE USE OF A DENOMINATION WHICH IMPLIES TERRITORIAL CLAIMS.

VI. THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA IS PREPARED TO FULLY CONSIDER ALL FUTURE REQUESTS AND OBLIGATIONS ISSUED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY THAT ARE DEEMED APPROPRIATE FOR THE RECOGNITION OF A SOVEREIGN REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA.

Your Excellency, we formally submit this request to you to be appropriately forwarded to the Arbitration Commission for its full consideration. Attached is the official Resolution and



Report of the Assembly of Kosova regarding the aforementioned Referendum held in September 1991, the Resolution regarding the adaptation of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of Republic of Kosova, and the ratified Constitution of the Republic of Kosova. Also attached is a letter from Dr.Ibrahim Rugova, President of the Coordinative Body of the Albanian Political Parties of Kosova.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr.Bujar Bukoshi  
Prime Minister,  
Republic of Kosova

Ilaz Ramajli  
Chairman,  
Assembly of the Republic of Kosova

Attachments

c/c: The Honorable Lord Carrington

The Honorable Hans Van den Broek

The Honorable Jacque Delors

The Honorable Enrique Baron Crespo

The Honorable Antonis Samaris

The Honorable Douglas Hurd

The Honorable Hans Dietrich Genscher

The Honorable Roland Dumas

The Honorable Gianni De Michelis

The Honorable Francisco Fernandez Ordonez

The Honorable Jacques Poos

The Honorable Joao De Deus Pinheiro

The Honorable Uffe Ellemann-Jenssen

The Honorable Mark Eyskens

The Honorable Gerard Connins



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA  
Assembly of the Republic  
01 No 07/91  
Prishtina, 22 September 1991

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, in accordance with article 97, par. 1, item 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova, has adopted a

### RESOLUTION

To organize a Referendum to decide the sovereign and independence status of Kosova, with the right to participate as a constituent Republic within the alliance of sovereign Republics in Yugoslavia, on a basis of freedom and full equality...

1. In the territory of Kosova, a general referendum will be organized by means of which, in accordance with the direct freedom of choice of citizens, the population of Kosova will express its will concerning the Republic of Kosova as a sovereign and independent state, with the right to participate as a constituent Republic within the alliance of Republic of Yugoslavia based on freedom and full equality. The people will be asked to decide for or against the resolution of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova.

2. The Referendum will take place from the 26th to the 30th of September, 1991.

The Commission charged with the organization of the Referendum is obliged, and the Coordinative Body of the Albanian Political Parties of Kosova is requested to inform all citizens temporary living abroad or in diaspora of the organization of the Referendum, and to facilitate their participation.

3. The Government of Kosova is bound, and the Coordinative Body of the Albanian Political Parties of Kosova is requested to ensure the presence of international organizations and personalities during the Referendum, who shall confirm the authenticity of the results of the Referendum.

The Chairman of the Assembly  
of the Republic of Kosova  
Ilaz Ramajli



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA  
Assembly of the Republic  
Prishtina, 19 October 1991

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, in its session of 19 October, 1991, examined the results of the Referendum, which was held in Kosova from the 26th to the 30th of September 1991, on the status of its sovereignty and independence. After discussion, it gave its full approbation recounting the results of the referendum in the following

### REPORT

- . Of the 1,051,357 eligible voters of Kosova, 914,902 (87.01%) individuals participated in the referendum.
- . Of those individuals that participated in the referendum, 913,705 (99.87%) voted in favor of Kosova's sovereignty and independence.
- . 164 citizens voted against sovereignty and independence and 933 were determined to be invalid.
- . 136,555 (12.99%) citizens abstained from participating in the referendum.
- . There were 1,500 polling locations administered by 450 polling units for the Referendum.

In accordance with the results of the Referendum, the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova declares the initiative a success and compatible with the norms and laws of the Republic of Kosova.

**THEREFORE THE ASSEMBLY OFFICIALLY DECLARES KOSOVA TO BE A  
SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC**

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosova will retain all original documentation gathered by the Main Commission from all pooling locations.

The Chairman of the Assembly  
of the Republic of Kosova  
Ilaz Ramajli



REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA  
Assembly of the Republic  
01 No 06/91  
Prishtina, 22 September 1991

The Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, in its session of 22 September, 1991, according to article 97, par, 1, item 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova, have adopted and proclaimed the following

### RESOLUTION

*On the Republic of Kosova as a sovereign and independent state, with the right to participate as a constituent republics in Yugoslavia, on a basis of freedom and full equality.*

1. By this Resolution, in accordance with the will of the people and the authorization of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosova, provided for in the Constitutional Declaration of Kosova dated July 2, 1990 regarding the independence and equality of Kosova with other federal units and in conformity with the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova dated September 7, 1990, and on the basis of freedom and full equality.

2. This Resolution will be presented to seek all appropriate recognition to :

- .Republics of Yugoslavia
- .Parliaments and Governments of European States
- .Parliaments and Governments of the Permanent Member-States of the United Nations Security Council.
- .Domestic and foreign public opinion.

The Chairman of the Assembly  
of the Republic of Kosova  
Ilaz Ramajli



## REPORT ON THE MULTIPARTY ELECTIONS FOR THE PARLIAMENT AND PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVA, HELD ON MAY 24, 1992

In its session of May 2nd, the Parliament of the Republic of Kosova, announced the holding of free multiparty elections in Kosova for May 24, 1992, for deputies in the Parliament and the President of the Republic of Kosova.

Election campaigning was carried on in the periodicals that come out in Albanian language in Kosova, the news reel in Albanian language at the Zagreb Radio (Croatia), as well as at indoor meetings around the area.

The polling material was printed in three languages Albanian, Serbo-Croat, and Turkish. The Election Law and some basic documents were translated into English as well.

The elections were carried according to a combined electoral system. Out of at least 130 seats in the Parliament, 100 of them were elected through direct voting, i.e. according to majority system, whereas 30 seats were selected through a proportional system.

Elections were held on May 24, 1992. Polling places were open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

22 electoral subjects filed candidacy of 490 candidates for deputies (100 of them) in the Parliament of Kosova.

Democratic League of Kosova announced the candidacy of Dr. Ibrahim Rugova for the office of the President. His candidacy however, was supported by the other Albanian political parties, then the (Muslim) Party of Democratic Action, and the Turkish People's Party.

In Kosova, 853.432 voters made the electoral register of whom 762.267 have appeared in the elections that is 89.32 per cent of the registered voters, 80,791 voters did not come up in the elections, whereas 10,384 ballots were invalid.

In direct elections, the candidates of the Democratic League of Kosova got 574.755 votes, that is 76.44 per cent; the candidates of the Parliamentary Party of Kosova got 36.549 votes, that is 4.86 per cent; the candidates of the Peasants Party of Kosova got 23.682 votes, that is 3.16 per cent; the candidates of the Albanian Christian Democratic Party got 23.303, that is 3.10 per cent; the independent (non-party) candidates got 24.702, that is 3.29 per cent. The other electoral subjects that participated in these elections got less than 1.87 per cent of votes, therefore they did not secure the right of participation in the proportional distribution of the seats in the Parliament.

The Albanians, Muslims, Turks, Romies, Croats, and a minor number of Serbs and Montenegrins participated in the May 24th elections.

The picture of the seats in the Parliament is as follows:

Democratic League of Kosova	96 deputies
Parliamentary Party of Kosova	13 deputies
Peasants Party of Kosova	7 deputies
Albanian Christian Democratic Party	7 deputies
Independent (non-party) candidates	2 deputies

People of Muslim ethnicity, according to the percentage of the population and proportional distribution, have 4 deputies, whereas 1 candidate of Muslim ethnicity won in the direct voting. In the composition of the new Parliament of Kosova are two deputies of Turkish ethnicity, who won in the elections as candidates of the Democratic League of Kosova.

14 seats in the Parliament of Kosova have remained vacant, which, according to the percentage of Kosova population and the proportional distribution of seats in the Parliament,



belong to people of Serbian and Montenegrin ethnicity.

Election for the president of Kosova have been held both in Kosova and abroad, in countries where Albanians from Kosova have been working as temporary job-holders. In Kosova, 762,257 voters voted for the proposed candidate for President, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova (Invalid and "against" were 3,812 votes), whereas outside Kosova voted 105,300 voters. In sum, 867,557 voters voted in favour of the candidate for the president of the Republic of Kosova.

The Serbian police interfered in some polling places in order to disrupt the election process. In two polling places the police confiscated part of the polling material.

The entire polling material of the May 24th elections was handed over to the Parliament of the Republic of Kosova.

Elections in Kosova were monitored by eight monitoring groups from USA and European countries. The elections were covered by 82 journalist crews of news agencies from all over the world. Fairness of the elections was confirmed also by the political subjects that participated in the elections, by the Republic Election Board, by foreign monitoring groups as well as many reports and articles of foreign and home journalists, in which a full picture of the election process was offered.

Kosova was the last area in Europe in which multiparty elections were held, affirming thus the commitment of its people to freedom and democracy.

Prishtina, May 15, 1992

Information Center of the  
Democratic League of Kosova



## CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword.....	3
 CHAPTER 1	
 THE ALBANIANS - AN AUTOCHTHONOUS POPULATION IN KOSOVA	
S. ANAMALI. The Illyrians and the Albanians.. ..	5
E.CABEJ. The problem of the autochthony of Albanians in the light of place-names.....	19
A.STIPCEVIC. Every story about the Balkans begins with the Illyrians.....	26
R.KATICIC. On the Illyrian anthroponymy and the ethnogenesis of the Albanians.....	29
H.BARIC. Some thoughts on the early habitat of the Albanians in the Balkan peninsula.....	31
 CHAPTER 2	
 THE ALBANIANS IN KOSOVA IN THE 12th-18th CENTURIES	
S.PULAHA. On the presence of Albanians in Kosova during the 14th-17th centuries.....	33
P.XHUFI. Albanian heretics in the Serbian mediaeval kingdom.....	48
P.BOGDANI. Kosova under the Albanian feudal state of the Balshas.....	55
A.DUCELLIER. Have the Albanians occupied Kosova ?.....	63
 C. JIRECEK About the Albanians in the northern and northeastern territories in contact with the Slav population.....	69
M.SUFFLAY. The Illyrians, the Albanians and the Slavs: problems of continuity and symbiosis.....	71
 CHAPTER 3	
 THE ALBANIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN KOSOVA	
E.PLLANA. On the deportation of Albanians from the territory of sandjak of Nis of Kosova.....	73
S.POLLO. The Albanian League of Prizren and the struggle for national unity and liberation.....	80
Z.CANA. The policy of the Serbian government towards the Albanian national movement in 1908-1912.....	91
A.PUTU. On the setting of the borders of Albania in the north and northeast.....	99
D.TUCOVIC. The colonial wars.....	109
 DOCUMENTS	
Appeal of the Central Committee for the defence of the Rights of the Albanian Nationality. (May, 1878).....	111
Protest of the population of Shkodra, etc.....	113
Protest of 6 200 Albanian emigrants expelled from the Kazas of Nis, ect .....	115
About the refugees from Toplitza and Vranja (1878).....	116
Decision of the Albanian League of Dibra and the League of Toskeria for an autonomous vilayet.....	117



The activity of the Albanian League of Prizren in the Vilayet of Kosova (1880).....	118
From the report of Goschen to Granville (1880).....	120
Report of Dervish Pasha about the circumstances in which the Albanian League of Prizren was formed and its character (December 1880).....	122

#### CHAPTER 4

##### THE ALBANIAN POPULATION OF KOSOVA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

A.HADRI. The position and the condition of Kosova in the Kindom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941) .....	127
Z.SHTYLLA. The forced deportation of Albanians in the years 1912 - 1941.....	140
M.VERLI. The colonizing agrarian reform in Kosova and the other Albanian regions in Yugoslavia after the First World War.....	151
L.RUSHITI. The outlaw movement in Kosova (1918-1928).....	162

##### EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS

Atrocities in Albania .....	165
Will it never end ? .....	166
K.NOVAKOVIC. The colonization and Serbianization of Kosova .....	168
The Moslems in Southern Yugoslavia.....	171

##### DOCUMENTS

Report presented to the Carnegie dotation by the members of the Inquiry Commission in 1914.....	173
The program of the Albanian general uprising of spring 1919 in the Dukagjin Plateau .....	175
Memorandum of H.Prishtina, B.Curri ect, to the League of Nations.....	176
V.CUBRILOVIC. The expulsion of Arnauts.....	178
A leaflet to the progressive youth of Kosova .....	186
H.BAJRAMI. The Yugoslav - Turkish convection on the deportation of Albanian (1938) .....	187
Convention with Turkey for the emigration of the Moslem population from Southern Serbia .....	192
B.KRISMAN. Dr. Ivo Andric's report on Albania in 1939 .....	193

#### CHAPTER 5

##### THE ALBANIAN POPULATION OF KOSOVA AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANLW

L.NASI. The special features and results of the Anti-fascist National Liberation War in Kosova .....	196
A.LALAJ. On the Bujan Conference .....	206

##### DOCUMENTS

Resolution of the Bujan Conference .....	216
--	-----



## CHAPTER 6

### THE OPPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE ALBANIAN POPULATION IN YUGOSLAVIA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

L.NASI. Eight months in the history of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia (November 1944 - July 1945) .....	222
Z.SHTYLLA. The deportation of Albanians in Yugoslavia after the Second World War (1950 - 1966) .....	233
K.PRIFTI.- M.VERLI. Aspects of the economic situation of Kosova (1980 - 1989)..	242
M.ROUX. Kosova: a retarded and insufficient economic development .....	251
H.ISLAMI. The demographic problems of Kosova and their interpretation.....	261
K.PRIFTI. Who uses violence in Kosova and against whom it is directed ?.....	277
L.OMARI. The constitutional changes and the autonomy of Kosova .....	286
R. QOSJA. Open letter to the Serbian writers .....	296

### DOCUMENTS

V.CUBRILOVIC. The problem of minorities in the new Yugoslavia .....	301
What is that is not Albanianization ? .....	307
Appeal of 215 Albanian intellectuals of Kosova .....	314
Resolution of the European Parliament (1989) .....	319
Resolution of the House of Representatives of the American Congress .....	320
Resolution of the U.S. Senate .....	321

### EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESS

I.RUGOVA. The Serbs return to take revenge .....	322
Z. CANA. The steel broom spares no one .....	325

## CHAPTER 7

### THE DECLARATION OF KOSOVA'S INDEPENDENCE

Constitutional declaration of the Assembly of Kosova .....	329
Constitutional law on the implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosova .....	331
Resolution of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania .....	334
The Republic of Kosova - A sovereign and independent state .....	335
The declaration of the government of the Republic of Albania .....	337
A political declaration .....	338
The Republic of Kosova is recognised as a sovereign and independent state.....	340
Letter to the extraordinary EPC Meeting of Brussels (Dec. 16,1991) .....	341
Resolution .....	344
Report .....	345
Resolution .....	346
Report on the multiparty elections for the Parliament and President of the Republic of Kosova, held on May 24, 1992 .....	347